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CULT CLASSIC
1985 SUZUKI GS1150E



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March/April 2016

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ROAD MAP

After 43 years, this 1963 Royal Enfield Interceptor is still one of owner Greg Lawless' favorites. P. 14.



JEFF BARGER

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ON THE WEB!

Vegas Auctions

Top money at the 2016 Las Vegas motorcycle auctions went to a one-of-one 1951 Vincent Series C White Shadow. Built to Shadow specs with polished instead of black enameled cases and painted Chinese Red new, it sold at Bonhams' auction for \$434,000 including premium, making it the 10th most expensive bike ever sold at auction. More highlights at MotorcycleClassics.com/Vegas-2016



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Moving targets

What we call classic is something of a moving target, and while some will disagree, I put the three “modern” bikes featured in this issue — BMW’s wild 1989-1993 K1, Harley-Davidson’s unexpected 1994 VR1000 and Suzuki’s more staid 1985 GS1150E — firmly in that category.

When BMW released the K1 in 1989, its radical styling turned off BMW fans in particular, who reacted in something approaching mute horror at the K1’s decidedly un-BMW appearance, its bodywork punctuated by lurid ketchup or blue and yellow paint schemes with screaming yellow graphics.

I loved it, however, and so did a few others. In his 1989 report in *Rider*, Clement Salvadori praised the K1 as an “ideal sporting bike.” Rolling on the throttle to test the K1’s capacity, he reported effortless 100mph cruising through Italy’s Gran Sasso mountains. The downside? A price tag approaching \$14,000, enough money to buy two of the finest and fastest new sport touring bikes from Japan, like the Kawasaki Concours and Yamaha FJ1200. Although I think time has been kind to the K1, it surprises me that even today it still inspires the same kind of love it or loathe it response it did all those years ago, with more people apparently still in the loathe it camp.

Harley-Davidson’s wild VR1000 created similar confusion in the Bar and Shield crowd when it was first unveiled back in 1993. Granted, it was never really intended to be a street bike (a missed opportunity according to tester Alan Cathcart), but it pushed some of the same aesthetic buttons as the K1. It sported the traditional orange and black Harley colors, but in a wild Jekyll and Hyde presentation, with one side of the bike black and the other orange, a scheme that continued to the frame even though it was hidden by the VR1000’s very un-Harley-like acres of plastic.

The K1 and the VR1000 are both important bikes, but for somewhat different reasons. Even though the K1 failed in the marketplace, the exercise seemed to embolden BMW, which was slowly working to release itself from a decades-long association with air-cooled opposed twins. For Harley, the VR1000 exercise seemed to have an almost opposite effect. Unfortunately for Harley, the VR1000 was no match for its competition on the track, and unlike BMW, Harley was experiencing record growth with its traditional air-cooled V-twins, a decades-long association it was keen on maintaining. Change came slowly at Harley, and the VR had long disappeared in the rearview mirror by the time the radical — for Harley — 1,250cc liquid-cooled V-Rod (a bike whose V-twin engine shared direct DNA with the VR1000) was introduced in 2001.

In contrast with those two bikes, Suzuki’s 1985 GS1150E was greeted with enthusiastic appreciation for its refined and powerful engine. Heralded as the return of the standard Universal Japanese Motorcycle, it was roundly applauded for bringing old-school horsepower back to the street. Missing in most discussions was any praise for its awkward styling, a fact that betrayed something of a conditioned response to new Japanese bikes of the period. By 1985, we were used to Japan’s Big Four dressing their bikes in a multitude of different fashions as they battled for market share. The GS1150E may not have been perceived as an aesthetic triumph, but that didn’t seem to matter because it was exactly what we expected from the Japanese.

In contrast, the VR1000 never really had a chance, and frankly it’s amazing it was ever built for its intended track duty, much less to homologation street levels. Meanwhile, the K1 pushed too many of the wrong buttons, especially for the BMW faithful, many of them still trying to come to terms with BMW’s foray into inline fours starting some years earlier. It was just too much, too soon, a feature shared by many of motorcycling’s greatest designs.

Richard Backus
Editor-in-chief



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“Roller chains do not stretch in any normal usage and meaning of that word.”

Happy readers ...

I just wanted to thank you for your fine magazine. The quality of writing and photography is in a class of its own in the motorcycle publication field and the overall quality of the magazine, in terms of such things as paper weight and style, is among the top ranks of the magazine field in general.

I read several motorcycle publications, new bikes as well as classics, and look most forward to receiving *Motorcycle Classics* in the post. I very much appreciate the diversity of motorcycles in your articles. Though I grew up with Japanese motorcycles, I appreciate virtually all brands and countries of origin, though I am not a big fan of Harley-Davidson and I've never been into dirt bikes. I do enjoy reading about racing motorcycles and their history, as well.

I am a 60-year-old granddad and a deputy city attorney in a Southern California city. I have been riding since my early 20s, starting with two Suzukis (1980 GS550E and 1981 GS650E). I currently ride a 1999 Kawasaki ZRX1100 and

a 2000 Ducati Monster 900. I am restoring a 1981 Kawasaki GPz550D (though not making much progress on that for a couple of years). My wife also rides (a 2007 Yamaha FZ6) and, for the most part we spend our vacations on tours of the western U.S., though we are traveling to Europe to participate in an Edelweiss tour of the Alps next August (assuming travel to Europe is not too dangerous by then). In 2017, we plan to ride the Blue Ridge Parkway. Keep up the good work!

Rick Hall/via email

I was so happy to find your magazine. Living in the Pacific Northwest of Portland, Oregon, my winters are spent either working on my bike or reading just about anything related to motorcycles. I found the November/December issue on the magazine rack and was instantly impressed by your publication. The heavyweight glossy cover protects what really is a timeless periodical. These magazines will be of interest as long as two-wheeled travel continues.

The folks who write for you do a

fabulous job. The bike write-ups are written in a format that makes them unique to the bike and literally pulls the reader into the story. And thank you for the font size that us gray-haired guys can read. I know it costs a little more to use the good paper and print those flawless photographs and do all of the little extras that make such a fine periodical, but thank you for doing it!

Russ Miller/Portland, Oregon

... happy and sad readers ...

Another great issue (January/February 2016) with marvelous old bikes everywhere. Excellent Barber Festival coverage; shook my head at the Santiago custom bike and shed a tear, but it was for a good cause. The pictures of the BMW R60/2 were excellent as usual, but Mr. Williams' text didn't hold up to his usual high standards and contrasted rather sharply with his article in the same issue on the Brough, which was very rewarding reading.

I've owned and ridden numerous /2s, /5s and air-cooled RTs, and the BS level

RIDERS

Rider: Malcom Gruver, Wichita, Kansas
Age: 75. Malcom's been riding since he was 14
Occupation: Retired
Rides: 1970 BSA Thunderbolt

Malcom's story: "Four years ago, after unloading at a power plant in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, I pulled out of the loading dock, looked across the street, and saw a half-covered bike under a tarp by a garage. It was a 1970 BSA Thunderbolt. I contacted the owner, made a deal on price, loaded the bike that was missing the tank, seat, bars, one wheel, and three milk cases of parts into the trailer and headed back to Wichita, Kansas. Over the next three years I located parts, had the frame powder coated and started the restoration process. The

engine and transmission rebuild and restoration were done by Barnyard Restoration in Baldwin City, Kansas, the chrome and paint by ACC Co. in Haysville, Kansas, the pinstripe work was done by Signworks in Park City, Kansas, the polishing by Choc Taw in Clearwater, Kansas, and I got all my parts from Klempf's British Parts. I saved approximately 14 pounds using a 2-into-1 exhaust and a dry-cell battery. This has been a joy for me, as I have been riding since I was 14 years old, almost 61 years ago."



Another BSA saved: Malcom Gruver's 1970 Thunderbolt as found (left) and today. Wow.

Want to see your bike here? Email high-res (300dpi) photos along with information on your bike to lhall@motorcycleclassics.com

of the interview with Mr. Richter seemed a bit high. The claim that the R60/2 has a better power-to-weight ratio than the R69S struck a sour note, so I looked up the specs in Ian Falloon's BMW twins book. In 1962 the R60 carried 15 pounds less weight and had 30hp to the R69S' 42hp. I agree that the R60 can be a sweet running bike, but have to wonder if his R69 is running to its full potential. I find Mr. Richter's admission that he doesn't know how many miles he's put on this bike somewhat uncharacteristic of a typical BMW owner and got a chuckle at his claim that he "can keep up with all the modern bikes." Over the long haul perhaps, but it makes me wonder about the riding ability of his companions and suspicious that Williams was paid by the word for this article, not facts. That's enough ranting from me to last awhile. Keep up your masterful coverage of the classics.

Ben Beckley/Sisters, Oregon

I'm a long-time fan of airhead BMWs in general and /2s in particular and very much enjoyed the "Elegance in Motion" article featuring the R60/2. In today's over-active and over-scheduled world, there are few things as satisfying as a two-lane ride in the country on a well-sorted /2. I have one question about the article, though, and that has to do with the comment that the power-to-weight ratio of the R60 is superior to either the R69S or the R50. According to BMW, the R50 had 26 horsepower and the R60 had 30. They both weighed 436 pounds at the curb, so the R60 does have a slight power-to-weight advantage over the R50. However, the R69S was rated at 42 horsepower, which represents a 40 percent increase over the R60, clearly a significant power-to-weight ratio advantage since the R69S was only some 9 pounds heavier. As always, thanks for a great magazine.

Richard Green/Hoschton, Georgia

Ben and Richard,

While the power-to-weight discussion in the article was there simply to reflect the owner's opinion, we should have made the facts that

Mangled Hodakas

Yours is my favorite motorcycle magazine, and will remain so as long as you continue to focus on pre-1980 motorcycles, whatever their country of origin. I appreciate your more frequent attention to 2-stroke machines, and I forgive you for including articles on such motorcycles as the 961 Norton and the Britten, which apparently you have declared to be "classic" without regard to their age. You could lose "Rides and Destinations" and I doubt anyone would notice. If I want to read travel articles, I can go to any number of other magazines. You need to keep your focus on the motorcycles and leave the traveling to some other publication. I have no other complaints save the occasional copy editing lapse, which is the subject of this email.

Please look at Page 11, the small sidebar on the 1976-78 Hodaka 250SL (January/February 2016). The first sentence begins with a dangling modifier, "Credited with instigating the US dirt bike craze with its 1964 90cc Ace," which by rule must modify the grammatical subject of the sentence, the 250SL. Presently, it modifies Hodaka, which is a syntactical non-starter. I would repair this by keeping your opening, but changing what follows to "Hodaka brought its largest-displacement dirt bike, the 250SL, to market in 1976." Now Hodaka is the grammatical subject and all is right.

By my reading, the very next sentence may also begin with a dangling modifier: "Designed and distributed by Pacific Basin Trading Co. (Pabatco) in Athena, Oregon, Hodaka frames ..." Do you mean to say that the frames were designed and distributed by Pabatco, or that Hodaka motorcycles were designed and distributed by Pabatco? This sentence as it is presently constructed uses "frames" as the grammatical subject. Were Hodaka frames built in Athena and shipped to Japan where the complete motorcycle was assembled? If that is the case, you are right and I have misread the sentence. So then what is the origin of the brand name "Hodaka," if they were simply the engine supplier? I'm confused.

Jim Gebhardt/Leavenworth, Kansas

Jim,

Your note takes me back to junior high school and Mrs. Wilbur, who forever — and apparently without success — attempted to correct my mangled English. Hodaka frames were indeed designed in Athena, but manufactured by Hodaka in Japan. — Ed

separate the two bikes clearer for readers. Heap the blame on us, not Greg Williams, and thanks for calling us out. Really. — Ed

... and unhappy readers

Please inform your tech writer that the article about primary chain replacement contains a frequent error. Roller chains do not STRETCH in any normal usage and meaning of that word. Roller chains get longer and fit more loosely because they wear out, usually from lack of or indifferent lubrication. The roller pins wear smaller, the roller holes wear larger. This increases clearances which

makes the entire chain longer from use. Stretching would be caused by exceeding the tensile strength of the assembly, which surely is not happening here. The proper term would be "elongation," which is usually expressed as a percentage by the chain manufacturers when discussing the wear limit of a roller chain assembly. This is not hard to get right. Please do so.

Richard Nowak/via email

Richard,

You're correct, of course, but the net effect for the user is that the chain is longer, which, for most of us, is easier to think of as stretch. — Ed

CB350 crankcase damage

I'm pretty sure I know how the crankcase on your project Honda CB350 was broken (January/February 2016). Back in the day, I had a 1972 CB350 upon which I had mounted Triple A brand crash bars. The upper tube of the crash bar was attached to the bike's frame with U-bolts. However, the lower tube was connected to where the crankcase bolted to the frame. Once, the bike and I went down on its left side. It appeared that the bars had prevented further damage until I noticed that the left-front crankcase mounting point was broken. It looked exactly like the photograph of yours.

Bob Sheehan/Boulder County, Colorado

Bob,

We're guessing you're exactly correct, as our project 1970 Honda CB350 was previously fitted with crash bars. Thanks for solving the mystery, and for everybody else with crash bars on their old Hondas, you've been warned! — Ed

7 full-face helmets to get you on the road this spring

1 Fresh from the team at Joe Rocket is the new R1000X Blaster helmet. The helmet is both Snell and DOT approved, and uses a polycarbonate composite shell. The R1000X Blaster features the Quadport 2.0 ventilation system, which uses two large front intakes channeled through to an aerodynamic rear venturi-effect spoiler to pull heat and humidity up and out of the helmet. It also has adjustable forehead and chin bar intake vents, combined with three lower intake and four lower exhaust vents to ensure a cool, dry ride. It also has a fully removable, washable interior, and its optically superior face shield is hard coated outside and anti-fog coated inside. The R1000X Blaster also comes with an additional hard-coated, dark smoke shield. Available in red/yellow, blue/orange or black/silver (shown). It's a nice lid for the price, and one of the more affordable helmets here. Sizes: S-2XL. Price: \$169.99. More info: joerocket.com



2 One of Arai's best-known helmets has recently been updated: The Corsair-X is the latest evolution of the Corsair line, and to top it off, it's available in a great throwback paint scheme. To commemorate "Fast" Freddie Spencer's 1985 World Championship season, Arai debuted the Corsair-X Spencer 30th in a distinctive white, blue and red graphic with gold stripes and a Freddie Spencer emblem on the back. Arai is unique in offering different interior fit shapes to match different head shapes. The Corsair-X is Arai's intermediate-oval shape and features Arai's VAS Max Vision shield with a standard Pinlock insert. Featuring a variable axis with a moving pivot point, the VAS shield opens and closes incredibly smoothly. The smooth and strong Arai R75 shell is created from super fiber and special synthetic fibers and the liner is made of updated Eco-Pure material, which helps maintain a neutral pH level close to the skin. The liner is removable and washable, and different-sized crown pads can be used to customize the fit. Four adjustable vents work together to adjust the temperature as needed. Snell 2015 and DOT approved. Unquestionably one of the finest helmets available, but for a price. Sizes XS-3XL. Price: \$969.95 (as shown). More info: araiamericas.com

3 The Bell Qualifier DLX is the only helmet here that comes equipped with a Transitions

2 SOLFX adaptive face shield, which works just like sunglasses with photochromic lenses by automatically adapting to light. The shield is clear at night and in low light, and then gets progressively darker as ambient brightness increases. The shield also uses NutraFog II anti-fog, anti-scratch and UV protection. The Qualifier DLX is made with a lightweight, ventilated polycarbonate shell featuring four adjustable vents, a removable and washable moisture-wicking interior, contoured cheek pads, and a padded wind collar that reduces wind and road noise. Another cool feature of the DLX is that it's built to accommodate a Bell Sena SMH10 or Cardo Scala Rider Q1/Q3 Bluetooth stereo headset and intercom. Available in graphics and solid colors, including solid white (shown), this is a modern-looking, well-made helmet that delivers the goods at a great price. DOT approved. Sizes: XS to 2XL. Price: \$249.95. More info: bellhelmets.com/powersports



"It's an affordable, retro-cool lid that always draws admiring attention."



4 Updated for 2016 in a variety of new colors and graphic designs, the Gringo S helmet from Biltwell is still one of our favorite lids, a great looking helmet with classic styling and modern usability. Shown here is the latest Gringo S in the new Gloss Blood Red color. The Gringo and Gringo S both use an injection-molded ABS shell, a shock absorbing EPS liner, plus hand-stitched, brushed Lycra interiors. The cheek pads are removable for cleaning, and the big eye port offers excellent visibility. The shield provides good optics, and is secured closed with a snap on the left side. It's an affordable, retro-cool lid that always draws admiring attention, perfect for wearing while riding your vintage bike. DOT approved. Sizes XS-2XL. Price: \$199.95. More info: biltwellinc.com

5 HJC Helmets has debuted a premium brand called RPHA (pronounced "arfa") which stands for Revolutionary Performance Helmet Advantage. The RPHA 10 Pro is a beautifully finished lid. The shell uses HJC's "Advanced Premium Integrated Matrix Construction," which is a matrix of carbon fiber, Aramid, fiberglass and organic non-woven fabric combined to form a strong yet lightweight composite shell. The Advanced Channeling Ventilation System uses three lower vents and two top vents to flush heat and humidity up and out of the helmet. The interior is made of SilverCool Plus, which is a soft, moisture-wicking anti-bacterial fabric that feels very comfortable. Both the crown and cheek pads are removable and washable. The optically superior, pinlock-prepared shield uses a nice one-touch open/close locking system designed for an extremely secure seal to reduce wind noise. Available in a variety of solid colors and graphics, the RPHA 10 Pro is the nicest HJC helmet we've ever worn and definitely good value for the money. Snell and DOT approved. Sizes XS-2XL. Price: \$374.99 (Anthracite, as shown). More info: hjchelmets.com



6 The latest full-face helmet from the folks at Fulmer is the AF 62B. One of its coolest features is the iShade, which is an integrated sun shade that flips down with just the pull of a lever on the helmet's left side. The thermoplastic shell has three front vents, with one on the chin bar and two on top, plus one on the crown. The optically correct shield features a quick-release mechanism for super-easy removal and the soft headliner and cheek pads, made from Wick Away comfort liner, are removable and washable. The AF 62B is available in a variety of colors and designs. DOT and ECE22.05 approved. Sizes XS-2XL. Price: starting at \$124.95. More info: fulmerhelmets.com

7 Fresh from Scorpion is this slick new lid, the EXO-T1200. We ordered ours in the Freeway White color shown here, a cool-looking flat black with white accents. The helmet shell uses TCT, or Thermodynamic Composite Technology, which is a proprietary five-layer blend of interlaced and specially formulated fiberglass, Aramid and organic poly-resin fibers. The Venturi Super Vent ventilation system uses two intake and three exhaust ports to draw fresh air in and warm air out of the helmet. The Everclear No Fog face shield is quickly detachable and features a neat, no-hassle lock to keep it in the down position. It also has an anti-scratch coating, and there's a SpeedView retractable sun visor inside. The liner features an inflatable cheek pad system for a personalized fit, and the liner is moisture wicking and anti-microbial. The EXO-T1200 is available in a variety of colors and designs. DOT approved. Price: \$359.95 (as shown). More info: scorpionusa.com



"If you've never ridden a classic Vespa, it's truly a unique experience."

VESPA P150X

Years produced	1977-1982 (with variants to 1999)
Power	8.8hp @ 5,700rpm
Top speed	63mph
Engine	149.6cc (57.8mm x 57mm) fan cooled, rotary valve 2-stroke single
Transmission	4-speed, direct final drive
Weight	176lb
MPG	80mpg
Price then/now	\$1,250 (est.)/\$1,500-\$3,000

sportier Vespa models, first introduced on the VS1 GS 150 of 1955 and adopted across "premium" 150 models from the VLA 150 GL of 1962. The larger wheels improved handling by increasing their gyroscopic effect. Unfortunately, the PX also inherited the VS1's 6-inch SLS drum brakes, rather than the 7-inch drums from the VSB 160 GS.

The PX was also the first Vespa with electric start and a 12-volt electrical system. Electronic ignition arrived with the P150X-E of 1981. At the same time, locks for the side panels were moved beneath the seat to deter thieves. And the front suspension was modified to reduce the inherent trailing link "dive" under braking. In many ways, the P150X was the ultimate "real" Vespa, the culmination of 30 years of active development. The VLX line remained in production until 1999 after more than 345,000 were built!

If you've never ridden a classic Vespa, it's truly a unique experience. The PX's electric start is just a nicety; any Vespa in good condition will start on the first lazy kick. Rolling off the center stand, you feel the weight of the engine on the right side. But as soon as you pull in the clutch, twist the left grip back to select first gear, open the throttle, feed in the clutch

and you're rolling, the asymmetry evaporates. Handling is vague and twitchy, especially with the odd weight distribution, small wheels and open frame. Suspension is lively, and the brakes are sluggish. A Vespa may not be considered a "real" motorcycle by many motorcycle enthusiasts, but when you consider you're riding a design icon and an expression of Italian moto-art as definitive as a Ducati 916, all other considerations disappear. And besides, they're fun. *Avanti!* **MC**

CONTENDERS

1985-1987 Honda Elite 150

Honda entered the 150cc scooter market for just four years, but produced three different versions. In 1984 the first Elite, the 125cc CH125, arrived as the "Deluxe" with a pop-up headlight and digital dash, followed by the similar but larger 150cc CH150 in 1985. A "standard" version featured an analog dash and integrated headlight. For 1987, the Deluxe was dropped and the standard model fitted with new, sleeker bodywork.

All were powered by a unique single overhead cam, liquid-cooled 4-stroke engine with an automatic transmission. Suspension used a trailing link at the front, while the transmission acted as a swinging arm at the rear, attached by dual

spring/shock units. Wheels were 10-inch cast aluminum.

Considering the short production run, an impressive number of Elite 150s are still on the road, most owners reporting excellent durability and reliability — though an oil change every 1,000 miles is recommended. If you decide to buy one, check the centerstand (it's weak and can fail), and look for cracks in the intake manifold (resulting in lean running). A dead starter may just be due to a failed rear brake interlock switch, a common fault. Otherwise, the Honda CH150 is twist and go!

- 1985-1987
- 10hp @ 7,500rpm (est.)/65mph
- 152.7cc liquid-cooled SOHC 4-stroke single
- Centrifugal clutch, Honda V-Matic belt-drive CVT
- 231lb/75mph
- **Price then/now:** \$1,798 (1986)/\$1,500-\$3,000



Scooter rivals to Vespa's P150X

1980-2009 Bajaj Chetak

Bajaj is the sixth-largest motorcycle manufacturer in the world, and at one time produced more than 100,000 Chetaks a month! Essentially a license-built 1965 Vespa VLB 150 Sprint, the Chetak remained in production long after its Italian counterpart, gaining a 4-stroke engine in 2002.

The first Chetak copied Vespa's earlier generation 145cc fan-cooled, rotary-valve engine, with breaker points ignition, 6-volt electrics and a kickstarter only. While it was fitted with the larger 10-inch wheels, the drum brakes were just a weedy 5-inch diameter. A large glove box was fitted behind the leg shield, and turn signals were added around 1990, incorporated into a squared-off front housing.

The Chetak became both a treasured possession and a family workhorse in India, and as a result very few low-mileage examples survive there. Few were sold here in the U.S., and parts are hard to find. If you buy one, check mechanical operation carefully, and look for signs that your scooter may have been reconstructed from two halves welded together, apparently a common practice in India! Vespa

also licensed another Indian company, LML, to produce the P150X, from 1986-on, and it's still available in the U.S. (except California) as the 150 Stella, imported by Chicago's Genuine Scooters.

- 1980-2009
- 7.7hp @ 5,000rpm/60mph
- 145.5cc rotary valve 2-stroke single
- 4-speed, direct final drive
- 196lb/85mpg
- **Price then/now:** \$3,999 (2005)/\$1,500-\$2,500



A cache of Broughs surfaces in England and *Motorcycle Classics* hits the road

The lost Broughs of Bodmin Moor

Bonhams Auctions motoring specialist Jonathan Vickers first heard the legend of the lost Brough Superiors of Bodmin Moor about 20 years ago, but like many others he thought that it was just an urban myth.

"I was at the Royal Cornwall Show when a man told me that a family who lived in a remote village on Bodmin Moor might need advice on the best way to sell some old Brough Superiors," Vickers says, "but he couldn't remember the address." Rugged and desolate Bodmin Moor covers over 125 square miles of northeastern Cornwall, England, so Vickers' boss Ben Walker came up with the idea of using Google Street View. "We knew that the property was run down, and that there were a number of outbuildings, so we used Google to scout the location," he explains. "And we found one that looked promising."

When Vickers arrived at the property with a couple of Bonhams catalogs in hand, the family was happy for him to look inside the sheds. "I couldn't believe it," Vickers says. "There were eight Broughs, including a 1938 Matchless-engined SS100, a sidevalve 11-50hp JAP model, and even a 750cc BS4, one of only 10 of these 4-cylinder, twin-rear-wheel motorcycles to be made. Some were partly dismantled; others were submerged under decades of dust, old machinery and household clutter."

The collection had been amassed in the 1960s by Frank Vague, who was a frail 94 years old when the Bonhams team arrived. "He hadn't seen them for a while," adds Walker. "I think that he believed they were still in the same condition as when he pushed them into the sheds and the pigsty. Unfortunately, after over 50 years, they had deteriorated somewhat." It took three months to pull all the bikes and parts out. "This is probably the last collection of unrestored Broughs in the world," adds Walker. "And one of the greatest motorcycle discoveries of recent times. There will never be an opportunity like this again." The Broughs of Bodmin Moor will be auctioned by Bonhams at Stafford on April 24, 2016, where the BS4 is expected to bring \$120,000-\$170,000. More info at bonhams.com

— Phillip Tooth



The horde included a 1938 SS100 (top) and this rare 750cc BS4.

Motorcycle Classics goes to Pennsylvania, the Isle of Man and more

It's going to be a busy summer at *Motorcycle Classics* as we add the inaugural Ride 'Em, Don't Hide 'Em Get-Away Aug. 5-7, 2016, at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in southwestern Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands, to our busy calendar.

The area is something of a best-kept secret, with miles of two-lane roads weaving their way through the surrounding countryside. It's also home to celebrated architect Frank Lloyd Wright's most

famous architectural structure, the incredible Fallingwater. Designed by Wright in 1935 and built over Bear Run Creek, Fallingwater is on the Smithsonian's Life List of 43 places to visit before you die.

We'll ride to Fallingwater for a private guided tour, riding down little-known back roads as we explore the area getting there. We'll also take a spin across the West Virginia border to Coopers Rock State Park, a stunning, little-known piece

of West Virginia defined by breathtaking views of the Cheat River Gorge.

Sweetening the deal, you won't have to bring your own bike if you don't want to, as we've teamed up with classic bike tour specialists Retro Tours (retrotours.com) to supply classic bikes from their 20-strong stable of Seventies twins, featuring gems including a 1971 Rickman Royal Enfield Interceptor 750, a 1973 Norton Commando 750 Fastback, a 1974

Benelli Tornado 750, a 1975 Ducati 860GT, a 1974 Kawasaki 650 W3, a 1977 Harley-Davidson XLCR Café and more.

In addition to our planned Saturday and Sunday rides will be a special dinner Saturday night, hosted by the editors of *Motorcycle Classics* and special guest Brian Slark, technical and restoration director at Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum. A former offroad racer and head of Norton's U.S. service and competition departments in the early 1970s, Slark, an AMA Hall of Famer, helped establish motocross in the U.S. in the 1960s.

Bikes from Retro Tours are limited and will be assigned on a first-come basis, so sign up quickly to reserve your bike and your spot on what's sure to be a very special weekend of relaxed motorcycling. For more details, see our ad on Page 73 or visit MotorcycleClassics.com/RideEvent



Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece, Fallingwater, will be on our Pennsylvania ride itinerary.

Arturi of Mototouring Italy. We'll ride across England, stopping at the National Motorcycle Museum on our way, then load our bikes on the Heysham ferry for the crossing to the Isle of Man.

Once on the Isle, we'll spend four full days living and breathing the Festival of Motorcycling and Classic TT. We'll watch the races and tour the Isle by motorcycle, taking in the different events going on during the festival and soaking up the IOM scene.

This will be a bucket list trip of a lifetime, so don't miss this incredible opportunity to experience the Isle of Man yourself. Mototouring has both vintage and modern bikes available for the tour. To find out more and reserve your spot see the Mototouring ad on Page 83 or log onto the Mototouring website at mototouring.com

Isle of Man Update

Time's running out to reserve your spot on the *Motorcycle Classics* Isle of Man Tour, Aug. 24-Sept. 2, 2016, with *Motorcycle Classics* editor-in-chief Richard Backus leading the tour alongside Eligio

Show time 2016: *Motorcycle Classics* vintage bike shows

In addition to our Pennsylvania and Isle of Man tours, we'll also be at shows across the U.S. in 2016.

First up is the **6th Annual Vintage Rally, June 4, 2016**, at the National Motorcycle Museum (nationalmcmuseum.org) in Anamosa, Iowa. The 2016 rally pairs the museum's annual antique and classic motorcycle show with a vintage bicycle show, plus there's the annual swap meet and the museum's newest exhibit, Streamliners. Telling the story of Land Speed Record competition, Streamliners looks at racing at Bonneville, Daytona Beach, Muroc Lake and other courses around the world. Always an excellent event, we've been a supporting sponsor since the first rally in 2011.

A week later we'll head to the **Rockerbox Motofest, June 10-12, 2016**, at Road America racetrack (rockerbox.us) in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. The weekend-long festival centers on AHRMA racing and a ride-in bike show, drawing riders from all over the country to showcase the greatest in classic style and fresh customization. We'll have a special *Motorcycle Classics* Editors' Choice Award, along with awards for top bikes in five different classes. The paddock will be packed with local and national vendors, live music, food and beer, and don't forget to enter the annual Rockerbox Sweepstakes, your chance to win Rockerbox Motofest tickets plus lodging for four. See Page 79 for more sweepstakes and event information.

The **5th Annual The Meet Vintage Motorcycle Festival, July 30, 2016**, at America's Car Museum (americascarmuseum.org) in Tacoma, Washington, is another must-see show. Staged on the museum's 3.5-acre Haub Family Field, The Meet features a used bike corral, food trucks, free seminars and vendor booths, not to

mention the incredible 165,000-square-foot museum and its 350-plus vintage American and European cars. A fantastic setting and incredible bikes make this show a standout every year.

Next up is the **11th Annual Bonneville Vintage GP, Sept. 2-4, 2016**, at Utah Motorsports Campus (formerly Miller Motorsports Park) in Tooele, Utah. A perennial favorite for racers and attendees, the Bonneville Vintage GP features great AHRMA racing and the crowd-favorite Battle of the CB160s LeMans Start on Saturday

and Sunday. *Motorcycle Classics* will host the annual Vintage Bike Show, with trophies awarded in six classes, including Best Restored and Best Rider in each class. The Utah British Bike Club always pulls out the stops, bringing the best from England to the show every year. It's a perfect way to spend the Labor Day weekend. More information at bonnevillevintagegp.com

Rounding out our year is the **12th Annual Barber Vintage Festival, Oct. 7-9, 2016**, at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, Alabama. There's no word yet on special guests or featured motorcycles, but we expect the festival to mark the grand opening of the museum's new 5-story, 85,000-square-foot extension currently under construction.

Officially the largest vintage event in the U.S., the Barber Vintage Festival features an amazing swap meet, great AHRMA racing, the Race of the Century for bikes 100 years old or older, and of course the world's pre-eminent motorcycle museum.

The *Motorcycle Classics* Vintage Bike Show happens Saturday afternoon, with trophies awarded in six classes, including Best Restored and Best Rider in each class. Look for updated information at MotorcycleClassics.com or barbervintagefestival.org



Lovely custom Rickman Kawasaki at Rockerbox 2015.

MADE LIKE A GUN

1963 Royal Enfield Interceptor

Story by Corey Levenson

Photos by Jeff Barger

When I was in high school 45 years ago, there was an older kid who was unremarkable except that he owned two Royal Enfield Interceptors. That made him cooler than cool, because the merely cool rest of us rode more common British bikes or maybe something Japanese.

Greg Lawless bought this 1963 Interceptor for \$500 in May 1973 as a college graduation present for himself. I suspect he experienced an immediate spike in his coolness. Over the last 42 years — including six moves involving three states — Greg's put lots of miles on it and made many memories with it. Though his current collection includes 26 motorcycles, Greg says the Interceptor is the last bike he'd sell.

A little background

Royal Enfield was founded in the 1890s in Redditch, England (just south of Birmingham) by two bicycle manufacturers who also made interchangeable gun parts for the Royal Small Arms factory in Enfield. For its logo, the new company chose an artillery field gun.

Royal Enfield's first motorized bicycle, built in 1901, was followed by models incorporating such innovative features as crankcases with integral oil tanks (1903) and rubber "Cush Hub" drives to reduce chain snatch (1912). Royal Enfields were the first English production motorcycles with dry-sump lubrication systems and gear-type oil pumps (1913). The "Super 5" model, launched in 1961, was the first British production motorcycle with a 5-speed gearbox.

In 1948, the company launched the model that was to become synonymous with Royal Enfield: the redesigned overhead valve single-cylinder Bullet. This robust and versatile machine was utilitarian but also excelled as a competition motorcycle, especially in trials events.

Although Enfield ceased U.K. production of motorcycles in June 1970 to focus on military contracts (Royal Enfield had been making aircraft and guided missile components as well as motorcycles), Enfield Bullets are still being made in India, mak-



ing Royal Enfields the longest continually produced motorcycles in the world.

Though never as large as BSA, Triumph or Norton, Royal Enfield had an advantage: Its small senior management team included enthusiastic motorcyclists and former competitors who knew what riders wanted. They fostered new ideas and encouraged the introduction of models known for innovative design and robust construction.

The Big Twins

Royal Enfield launched its first parallel (or vertical) twin in 1948, with a 64mm by 77mm bore and stroke and 25 horsepower. The basic design of the 500 Twin was to be carried through the subsequent, larger displacement models and included a long stroke for low-end power, a one-piece cast iron crankshaft, and separate cast iron barrels with aluminum heads and short alloy pushrods riding on a pair of camshafts.

Advanced features for the time included a full-flow oil filter



and semi-unit construction, with the gearbox bolted to the rear of the engine. The frame was welded steel with a single downtube attached to the front of the engine-gearbox unit, which acted as a stressed member. The swingarm rear suspension was a first for a parallel twin.

In 1953 the Meteor 700 was introduced as Britain's biggest parallel twin — BSA and Triumph offered only 650s at the time. The 36 horsepower, 693cc Meteor was primarily intended to meet the needs of the sidecar market. It was essentially a "Double-Bullet," each cylinder having the same bore (70mm) and stroke (90mm) — and pistons — as the 350cc single.

The Super Meteor followed in 1955 as a more sporting Meteor. Made in response to U.S. market demands for more power, it made 40 horsepower and was the first Royal Enfield capable of 100mph. The 51 horsepower Constellation followed in 1958 with hotter cams, a single 10TT9 Amal carb and siamesed exhaust.

In 1961 the factory made a limited run of Constellation-based specials for the U.S. market, the 700 Interceptor. Set up for

offroad enduro-style events, they weren't popular and most of the approximately 160 bikes were retrofitted by dealers with after-market horns, mirrors and lights and sold for road use.

In late 1962, Royal Enfield bored and stroked the Constellation's engine to 736cc to launch the 750 Interceptor Mk1. It went head-to-head in the showrooms with the new Norton Atlas 750 and, like the Norton, it was aimed squarely at the U.S. market. Both bikes were offered stateside before they became available in the U.K.

Enfield dynamically balanced its big twin engines, reducing vibration compared to large displacement bikes made by competitors, who used static balancing. The long-stroke design produced abundant torque from low revs, making the bikes very tractable and capable of impressive acceleration. On the downside, the separate barrels and heads meant that the engines — being stressed members — tended to flex, which, combined with poor crankcase venting, led to the bikes having a reputation for leaking oil, hence the nickname "Royal Oilfield."



1963 ROYAL ENFIELD MK1 INTERCEPTOR

Engine: 747cc air-cooled parallel twin, 71.5mm x 93mm bore and stroke, 8.5:1 compression ratio, 55hp @ 6,000rpm (claimed)
Top speed: 115mph (est.)
Carburettion: Two 30mm Amal Concentric
Transmission: 4-speed, chain final drive
Electrics: 12v (6v stock), BTH magneto (Lucas stock)
Frame/wheelbase: Single-downtube w/engine-gearbox as stressed member/57in (1,448mm)
Suspension: Telescopic forks front, dual shocks rear
Brakes: 7in (178mm) TLS (SLS stock) drum front, 7in (178mm) SLS drum rear
Tires: 3.25 x 19in front, 4 x 18in rear
Weight (dry): 410lb (186kg)
Seat height: 31.5in (800mm)
Fuel capacity: 3gal (11.4ltr)
Price then/now: \$1,168 (1963)/\$12,000-\$15,000



The Interceptor was upgraded in 1964 with a second petcock, float bowls on both Amal Monoblocs, magnetic instruments, Girling shocks, an auto-advance magneto, hotter "R" (Supersport) cams, and one less tooth on the countershaft sprocket for better acceleration. In the U.S., the 1964 model was known as the TT Interceptor. The single-carb Custom with standard cams was added in 1965, and the 1966 GT with twin carbs and sport cams gave three Mk1 models available that year.

The Interceptor Mk1a was introduced in late 1966. Produced at new facilities at Bradford-on-Avon, it featured twin Amal

concentric carbs, coil ignition and better engine breathing. Two models differing only in cosmetics were offered in the U.S.: The Road Scrambler TT7 (upswept pipes, chrome tank and exposed chrome shock springs) and the

Road Racer GP7 (flat pipes, painted tank and shrouded shocks, more like the old Mk1).

Royal Enfield produced its last twin, the Interceptor Mk2 (aka Series 2), from 1968 to 1970. The engine was redesigned to be wet-sump, the contact points were relocated in the timing cover, and Norton front forks and front brake were used. The Mk2 bikes





leaked less oil than the Mk1 versions, but were heavier and slower. The factory had plans for an 800cc Interceptor Mk3 successor, but never put it into production, although prototypes were made and road tested.

The Royal Enfield Interceptor was considered one of the Superbikes of the Sixties. When a Mk1 ran a 13.8-second quarter-mile, *Cycle World* editors proclaimed it the quickest stock production bike they had ever tested. In addition, a bike powered by two Royal Enfield Interceptor engines was the first non-streamlined motorcycle to exceed 200mph, hitting 203.16 mph at Bonneville in 1970.

Greg's Interceptor

Greg Lawless' 1963 Mk1 Interceptor was one of approximately 250 built that year and one of 979 Mk1s produced between 1962 and 1966. There were two variants of the Mk1 for the U.S. market — Greg's is the second type with a polished alloy instrument nacelle (not black) and a polished alloy wing knob for the steering damper (rather than a big black round knob). Unlike the U.S. models, the Mk1s sold in the U.K. and the rest of the world had bigger gas tanks, twin-sided 6-inch front brakes and shorter swingarms and wheelbase.

The 1962-1963 Mk1 had twin 1-1/8-inch Amal Monoblocs sharing one float bowl, a Lucas K2F

manual-advance magneto, a 6-volt alternator and a 4-speed Albion gearbox with a neutral finder. The gas tank had a single petcock (there was no reserve), and a Smiths chronometric speedometer and tachometer were standard.

In the 1980s, Greg rebuilt the top end with the help of J.B. "Bernie" Nicholson of *Modern Motorcycle Mechanics* fame in Saskatchewan, Canada. Oversize Hepolite pistons for 736cc engines were impossible to find, so Bernie provided 0.060-inch-oversize 700cc Constellation pistons, which are 0.020-inch oversize for a 736cc engine. Those pistons are still in the bike.

Greg undertook a major restoration of the bike in 2010, the end goal being a practical and rideable classic machine. He replaced the notoriously bad stock 7-inch single-leading-shoe front brake with a twin-leading-shoe unit from a modern Indian Bullet. He says it's a big improvement, but planning one's stops is still recommended.

Greg rebuilt the engine, giving it new valves and seats, new piston rings and new bottom-end main bearings and connecting rod bearings. It also got R-type cams, and a 19-tooth countershaft sprocket replaced the stock 20-tooth item. A Bob Newby Racing clutch and belt drive kit took care of clutch problems and primary case oil leaks. The stock Amal Monoblocs were replaced with modern 30mm Amal Premier



Cooldest kid on the block: Greg Lawless and his Interceptor.



The short lever on the gearbox is the neutral finder, a handy feature at stop lights (center).



Concentrics, and a modern BTH magneto replaced the Lucas K2F unit. This fixed an old problem of having up to 10 degrees of ignition timing variation between cylinders while also providing an improved spark advance curve. Electrics went from 6-volt positive ground to 12-volt negative ground, and with a Sparx single-phase alternator and solid-state rectifier/regulator/capacitor it can run without a battery.

Greg installed a Mk2 Interceptor-type oil cooler and carried out a few other modifications to improve engine lubrication. To address the lack of engine rigidity due to the engine's separate cylinder barrels and heads, Greg fabricated a stainless-steel head-steady plate that significantly reduces engine flex and in the process improves oil-tightness.

Originally Chinese Red, Greg repainted the bike in HiFi Blue (a stock color for 1964) — a three-stage application with silver base, blue midcoat, hand-painted gold pinstripes on the tank, and a clear topcoat over stripes and decal. Finally, the frame, swingarm, headlight housing, fork covers, taillight housing, and miscellaneous black items were powder coated.

Balance factor

It's easy for Greg to compare his Interceptor to other vertical twins — his current stable includes a 1961 Norton Manxman, a 1962/70 Greeves Triumph 500, a 1968 BSA Firebird Scrambler, a 1975/72 Rickman Triumph CR650 and a 1974 Norton 850 Commando Interstate.

Greg says the Interceptor's engine is wonderfully balanced, and even with the heavier oversize pistons, he says it is the smoothest 360-degree vertical twin without a balance shaft that he has ridden. It has gobs of torque and pulls stronger at low rpm than any vertical twin he has ridden except his Norton Commando.

One advantage of the engine's separate barrels and heads is cooler running and easier access for maintenance and, because the gearbox bolts directly to the back of the engine, variation in

primary chain tension is minimized. The integral oil tank means fewer external oil lines (and fewer leaks), and the engine design allows for swapping cams without disassembling the crankcase.

The neutral finder lever on the gearbox is also a nice feature. The transmission can be a little agricultural in its shifting, and the stock clutch tends to drag, so it's nice to be able to heel-tap the neutral finder when coming to a stop in any gear (except first) to find neutral.

On the road

Greg says the bike is nimble, yet also stable at high speed thanks to the longer U.S.-spec swingarm. "It's the first bike I went over 100mph on," Greg says, "in fact 110mph two-up in 1973. Only scared my rider — well, me a little."

Maintenance is relatively easy. One bolt retains the outer primary cover and there's good access to the spark plugs, rocker arms and magneto points. The oil drain plug is on the side of the engine case and the somewhat effective felt oil filter is easy to clean.

Support groups include a Royal Enfield owners club (royal.enfield.org.uk) and a website specifically about Interceptors (oze.mate.com/interceptor). Two excellent long-standing sources of parts and advice are Hitchcocks Motorcycles (hitchcocksmotorcycles.com) and Burton Bike Bits (burtonbikebits.net). Allan Hitchcock, in particular, has a reputation for being a tireless champion of the marque — not only keeping new-old-stock and pattern parts but also fabricating special bits and engineering new, improved solutions to old Enfield shortcomings.

Greg and his Interceptor are now in their fifth decade together, longer than many marriages last. Indeed, elevating the bike to its current lovely condition has been a labor of love. It has paid off though — the Enfield looks stunning and runs strong. Exactly what you'd expect from a marque whose motto was: "Made Like a Gun." Pretty cool, huh? **MC**

The final chapter: The Rickman Interceptor

The final chapter of the Interceptor story includes two specials not built by Royal Enfield, but based on the Mk2. In 1968, Floyd Clymer, Royal Enfield's Western U.S. distributor, made plans to market a line of motorcycles in the U.S. under the Indian name. He intended to put Mk2 Interceptor engines into a chassis built by Leo Tartarini of Italjet in Bologna, Italy. The first few Indian

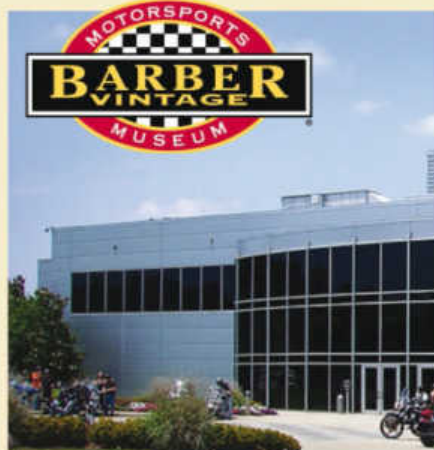
Enfields were launched in 1969, but Clymer passed away in January 1970 and the project floundered. The unused Interceptor engines ended up in a warehouse, needing a new home. Enter the Rickman brothers, renowned for their exceptionally well-made frames.

Don and Derek Rickman's Interceptor-powered special weighed 60 pounds less than a standard Mk2

and featured their fabled nickel-plated chrome-moly duplex "Metisse" frame with swingarm pivot chain adjustment, Ceriani forks, Lockheed disk brakes front and rear, and a fiberglass tank, seat and fenders. Between April 1970 and January 1972, approximately 130-137 Rickman Enfields were produced, making them rare and highly sought-after today. — *Corey Levenson*

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BAHN BURNER

1990 BMW K1

Story by Greg Williams
Photos by Stephen Clark

At the end of the 1980s, the high-horsepower superbike category belonged to the Japanese motorcycle makers. But Germany's BMW was about to unleash — in the words of Monty Python — something completely different.

Based on BMW's 4-cylinder K100, a touring-oriented model first introduced in 1984, the new for 1989 K1 was a sporting performance machine without a hint of touring pretensions. According to motorcycle historian Ian Falloon in *The Complete Book of BMW Motorcycles*, in the late 1980s BMW took a look at the available Japanese superbikes with their firecracker performance and taut handling. Tops in horsepower and agility, all of these Japanese rockets featured chain final drive.

"BMW decided the time was ripe for a shaft drive Superbike," Falloon writes, "one considerably more performance focused than the K100. When it was first displayed at the Cologne Show at the end of 1988, the K1 shattered the perception of BMW producing only conservatively styled touring and sport touring motorcycles." Of the resulting K1 fitting into the established superbike category, a March 1990 *Cycle* report said BMW had gone its own way, just as BMW always had.

A lifelong rider

Rick Pellegrino of Salt Lake City, Utah, is a serious motorcycle enthusiast and the owner of the 1990 BMW K1 gracing these pages. Like BMW, Rick is just as likely to go his own way, too. Owner of several different machines, Rick likes to ride his 1964 Harley-Davidson Panhead on Saturday and then his 2004 Ducati ST4S on Sunday. "I won't be able to tell you which one I enjoyed more," Rick says. At the start of our conversation, the Ducati was idling in the driveway.

Rick shut it off, rolled it onto his lift, and dropped the oil while he told me his story.

Rick grew up on Long Island, New York. No one in his family was interested in motorcycles, but they weren't strangers to gasoline and spark plugs, either. His grandfather was a DeSoto dealer, and his father had a Chrysler Plymouth dealership. Rick was already aware of motorcycles when the television series *Then Came Bronson* first aired in 1969. Rick was 15.

"After that, all I wanted was a Harley-Davidson Sportster," Rick explains. Starting with something smaller seemed wiser, though, and he was saving money to buy a Heathkit Boonie Bike. Rick didn't have to spend his money, however, because one afternoon his dad came home early and asked him to go out to the car and carry in some files he'd left in the trunk. Instead of paper, he discovered a used mini-bike. Rick rode that little bike everywhere, piling on the miles until he broke the front end off the machine.

In his junior year in high school Rick bought a 1971 Triumph Tiger — and a service manual; both saw serious use as he piled 27,000 miles onto the Tiger. He then sold the Triumph and bought a Honda CB750F, riding it coast to coast during a 12-week tour. From that point forward, Rick's never been without a motorcycle.

In the late 1980s, Rick and his wife, Christina, moved west to Salt Lake City. Shortly after they arrived, he flew back east and bought a friend's 1985 BMW



K100RT. He rode it home to Utah, where, at a Harley-Davidson dealership of all places, he met his soon-to-be mentor, Jerry Holcombe. Jerry persuaded Rick to join the local BMW group, and also inspired him to collect motorcycles.

A new direction

It's noteworthy that Rick's first BMW was a K100, as the K1 was developed from that platform. Introduced for 1984, the K-series was a radical departure for BMW. Until then, BMWs were identified by their flat-twin, horizontally opposed, air-cooled "boxer" engine with pushrod-operated valves. The new K-series featured a 4-cylinder, fuel-injected engine with liquid-cooling and dual overhead camshafts with two valves per cylinder. Laid on its side, the engine's crank is on the right hand side of the machine and the cylinder head on the left. The engine is a stressed member bolted underneath a tubular steel frame with a single shock rear swingarm pivoting on the gearbox housing. With BMW's lineage tied so closely to flat twins, why didn't the company move in the direction of developing a flat four? It's likely because Honda was already there with the liquid-cooled flat four they introduced in the Gold Wing starting in 1975.

BMW initially offered two K-bike

models, the base K100 and the slightly more sporting K100RS. The touring-oriented K100RT soon joined them, and the 3-cylinder K75 was added for 1986, two years after introduction of the K100. Fast forward to 1988, and BMW

launches the K1. According to Falloon, stylist Karl-Heinz Abe created a sports machine called "Racer" for the Time Motion exhibition of 1984. "This model inspired the prototype K1," Falloon writes, "but underneath the dramatic styling was a significantly developed K100. BMW not only wanted the K1 to stand out, but the company hoped its performance would be class leading."

The K1's 4-cylinder engine was considerably upgraded from that of the K100, notably with a revised cylinder head that now had four valves — 26.5mm intake and 23mm exhaust — per cylinder. The twin cams operated directly on bucket tappets, eliminating the need for adjustment shims, and compression was raised from 10.2:1 to 11:1. The crankshaft and connecting rods were lighter, there was a taller fifth gear, and fuel injection and ignition control were combined into one unit with the Bosch Motronic system. Claimed horsepower output, with emissions controls for the U.S. market, was 95.

At the time of K1 production, BMW adhered to a 100-horsepower cap on engine output for motorcycles in Germany, and because it made less power than most other superbikes, the K1 had to be as aerodynamic as possible for it to have any advantage against the competition. A seven-piece fairing,



Engine: 987cc liquid-cooled DOHC inline four, 67mm x 70mm bore and stroke, 11:1 compression ratio, 95hp @ 8,500rpm
Top speed: 143mph (period test)
Fuelling: Bosch Motronic fuel injection
Transmission: 5-speed, shaft final drive
Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition
Frame/wheelbase: Tubular steel space frame w/ engine as stressed member/61.6in (1,565mm)
Suspension: Marzocchi 41.7mm front fork, single-shock Paralever swingarm rear
Brakes: Dual 12in (305mm) floating discs front, single 11.2in (285mm) disc rear w/ABS
Tires: 120/70 x 17in front, 160/60 x 18in rear
Weight (wet): 612lb (278kg)
Seat height: 30.7in (780mm)
Fuel capacity/MPG: 5.2gal (20ltr)/45-50mpg

Owner Rick Pellegrino on his K1 at Miller Motorsports Park in Utah. The K1 may not be a track weapon, but it's an extremely capable high-speed touring bike, poised and confident on the road and easily capable of triple-digit speeds.

a two-piece valanced front fender and a tiny, covered passenger seat helped make the K1 the slipperiest, most wind-cheating motorcycle available at the time. All of the bodywork covered an improved chassis with revised geometry and larger diameter downtubes, top tubes and rear frame loop. Front suspension was provided by Marzocchi 42mm forks, and the rear featured BMW's Paralever system, which was first seen on the dual-purpose R100GS. Overall, the machine is long, measuring in with a 61.6-inch wheelbase.

The brakes are Brembo twin discs up front and a single out back. BMW added its anti-lock braking system, first



available as an option on the K100 in 1988, as standard to the K1. Available in lurid red or subdued blue, the cast three-spoke wheels and other accents were yellow. Initial reaction to the K1 was positive, but the model never achieved significant sales. Produced from 1988 to 1993, only 6,921 examples left the factory.

Trading hands

One of those K1s was sold to two Laotian brothers living in Utah. They both had good-paying jobs, and decided to pool their money and buy the ultimate motorcycle — a 1990 BMW K1.

"They'd never ridden anything larger than a 150cc scooter, and they were both quite short in the inseam," Rick says. "According to eyewitnesses, when they picked up the BMW, brand new, they dropped it before even leaving the parking lot. This turned out to be a regular occurrence, but never with any forward velocity. They'd stop, and drop it."

As a result, the bodywork was removed and repainted several times, but after covering only 2,660 miles the K1 was parked in the back of a garage belonging to one of the brothers. The bodywork was taken off it, the tires went flat, and the fuel went stale. It sat there for 20 years.

Meanwhile, one of the brothers had a stroke, and he decided it was time for the K1 to find a new home. He contacted the local BMW dealership, Harrison Eurosports in Sandy, Utah, hoping the dealership might be interested in buying the bike. It wasn't. However, during a meeting of the local BMW club, Harrison salesman Ren Charlesworth announced its availability. No one even went to look at it, and Rick wasn't at the meeting so he never heard about it until Ren mentioned it again at a British bike club meeting.

"I got the number and went



Top to bottom: The K1 bristles with unique touches including fairing-mounted switches and gauges; the rear seat cowl comes off for two-up riding; single-shock Paralever controls driveshaft effect; front wheel cowl improves aerodynamics.

and looked," Rick recalls. "It had a half-inch of dust on it, and I couldn't even get the tank open to look inside. I knew it would take a bunch of effort and money to get back on the road, and told him what I'd be willing to pay."

It wasn't enough, but later, just as Rick was about to leave the country for a two-week trip to Ireland, he got a call. Sweeten the deal, he was told, and it would be his. Rick phoned a friend and asked him to grab the cash, pay the brother, and pick up and drop off the K1. "When I got home I set to work cleaning the BMW and it was like a brand new motorcycle," Rick says. "Except for the painted bodywork, including the red mirrors, which should be black, it was completely original."

Rick took the tank off to clean it and the internal fuel pump, but didn't immediately get back to the project. That's when he called in BMW mechanic Tom Sill to help put it right. They got the tank and pump together, added fresh fuel, a bottle of injector cleaner and a battery. The BMW fired, smoked for a minute, and settled into an idle. The front brake master cylinder was replaced, and new tires went on the rims.

Next, it was time for the bodywork. Rick's painter told him there were about three different shades of red on the panels. But he wasn't chasing perfection, and Rick decided it looked good from 3 feet away, so he left the paint alone. That left applying the distinctive yellow K1 decals. Rick didn't feel qualified to install them, and as they cost \$90 a side he thought it wise to get professional help.

"I took them to my painter, and he said he didn't have anybody who could do it any better than I could," Rick says. "But he suggested taking it over to Woody at Driftwood Auto in Salt Lake City. I left them with Woody, and when I came back he said it had taken

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“Riding the K1 at high speed on a deserted desert highway is an experience to be relished.”

three hours to do the job. I was expecting a huge bill, then he said, ‘Sorry son, I’ll have to charge you \$75.’ I gave him \$100; in my opinion, if you don’t have the K1 decals, you don’t have a K1.”

In 2014, two years after buying the K1, Rick had it back on the road, and has since added 2,000 miles over two summers of riding. “I am a firm believer in comparing the performance of a machine based on a wonderfully foggy historical lens,” Rick says of the K1 experience. “If I had had an opportunity

to ride a new K1 in 1990, no doubt my impression of it would be different than when I compare it to, say, my KTM 990 Superduke. That said, riding the K1 at high speed on a deserted desert highway is an experience to be relished. Rare, silent, solid and historic, it is a wonderful window into BMW’s sporting past, especially if we acknowledge the recent success that BMW has had with their 1000RR superbike.”

Lastly, Rick explains, riding the K1 is an exercise in talking to people. An

accurate number of U.S. imports is unknown — perhaps 600 to 650 made their way here. According to Rick, not many people can recall ever actually seeing one in motion.

“Riders, former riders and non-riders invariably express either the ‘I’ve never seen one of these in person’ sentiment or exclaim, ‘What the heck is THAT?’ I think the engineers of the K1 would be pleased that 25-plus years hence they are still garnering that kind of attention and praise.” **MC**

The K1’s radical styling didn’t translate to high sales, but more than a quarter-century later it still looks cutting edge.



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TRIUMPH STREET TWIN

Birthday Bonneville

Story by Alan Cathcart

Photos by Alessio Barbanti and Matteo Cavadini

In terms of new models, things had been pretty quiet at Triumph of late. Yet Triumph set a new sales record in 2014, with 54,432 motorcycles delivered around the globe, a 4.5-percent increase over the previous year.

That quiet spell just came to an end. A radically revamped Speed Triple is coming out shortly, but reaching showrooms first is what's arguably the single most important new model introduction made by Triumph since John Bloor breathed new life into the extinct British motorcycle industry with the 1990 launch of the born-again Triumph brand.

Make that models, because at Milan's EICMA Show in November 2015, Triumph presented five new parallel-twin motorcycles powered by all-new liquid-cooled engines — one 900cc model and four 1,200cc big twins. These represent the next generation of the iconic Bonneville family of retro models, which with more than 140,000 built in the past 15 years since the born-again Bonneville's 2000 launch represent core products in Triumph's model lineup, presently responsible for between one-quarter and one-third of Triumph's annual sales.

Though designed and developed in the U.K. at Triumph's Hinckley base, these new models will all be manufactured at the company's three factories south of Bangkok, Thailand. Production has already commenced of the 900cc Street Twin, which rolls into dealer showrooms starting in January 2016. Representing the entry

level model to Triumph ownership, it essentially replaces the cast-wheel T100 Bonneville model that's been built in Thailand for several years. The Bonneville name now denotes the entire family of these models, each different variant having its own moniker — so far T120, Thruxton and Street Twin. Manufacture of the outgoing air-cooled T100-engined models has now ended, apart from the Scrambler, where ongoing demand has dictated one final year of manufacture in 2016. Following that, expect a new version powered by the new 900cc liquid-cooled engine.

The Street Twin

I had the chance to spend a day riding the Street Twin, first through the streets of Valencia on Spain's sunny Mediterranean coastline, then out through the hills and orange groves inland from the coast.

Just throwing a leg over its 29.5-inch-high seat makes you realize straightaway that this is a better thought out and more accessible bike than any previous Bonneville. While it's about half an inch higher than the outgoing T100's perch, it actually feels lower thanks to the way it's been narrowed where it meets the slightly smaller fuel tank. Shorter riders will welcome being able to place both



"Triumph has given the Bonneville an emphatic and welcome new lease on life."

The 2016 Triumph Street Twin ushers in a new water-cooled engine and improved riding experience.



feet flat on the ground at stoplights, yet at 5 feet 10 inches tall, I didn't feel at all cramped because there's lots of room to move around on the bike.

The seat itself has been redesigned to incorporate more substantial foam for a comfier posture. It's now well-padded enough to be comfortable on any journey a Street Twin rider is likely to make in terms of length, and the footrests are sufficiently low to be relaxing, without touching down at the relatively enthusiastic angles of lean permitted by the specially developed Pirelli Phantom Sportscomp tires.

In addition, the Street Twin's riding stance feels more natural and more engaging than before, thanks mainly to the shorter reach forward to the shorter, flatter one-piece steel handlebar with adjustable brake and clutch levers. You feel you're seated farther forward, and although the handlebar is closer to you, it asks you to lean slightly farther forward than with the more pulled-back bars of the old bike. Likewise, the footrests feel positioned slightly farther back, so you're encouraged to ride with your toes parked on the pegs, with knees tucked in tight to the flanks of the tank. You feel more a part



2016 TRIUMPH STREET TWIN

Engine: 900cc liquid-cooled OHC parallel twin, 84.6mm x 80mm bore and stroke, 10.55:1 compression ratio, 55hp @ 5,900rpm

Top speed: 110mph (est.)

Fueling: Multipoint sequential electronic fuel injection, ride-by-wire

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition, traction control

Frame/wheelbase: Twin downtube steel cradle frame/56.7in(1,439mm)

Suspension: 41mm forks front, twin shocks w/adjustable preload rear

Brakes: Single 12.2in (310mm) disc front, single 10in (255mm) disc rear w/ABS

Tires: 100/90 x 18in front, 150/70 x 17in rear

Weight (dry): 435lb (198kg)

Seat height: 29.5in (750mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 3.2gal (12ltr)/76mpg (claimed)

Price: \$8,700 (Jet Black), \$8,950 (all other colors)

of the Street Twin than before, and it's a very untiring place to be thanks to the complete lack of vibration at any revs up to and including redline from the all-new 270-degree parallel-twin engine. The fuel tank is well shaped, so you grasp it easily with your knees, and the retro-looking round mirrors give a good view and don't vibrate. This bike was obviously developed and refined by people who rode it a lot.

On the road

To confirm this, thumb the clever combined kill switch and starter button to send the engine into life and relish the unexpectedly glorious note of the stock Street Twin's exhaust. That Bloor's boys got it through Euro 4 compliance complete with this great sound of twin-cylinder music is quite

an achievement. Next, savor the extremely light lever action of the cable-operated oil-bath, slip-assist clutch, which makes riding in traffic or city streets completely untiring. The gearbox shift action is flawless and fully up to Japanese quality, though it's better to use the clutch at all times since it's quite hard to consistently change gear upwards smoothly without the clutch. The



Clockwise from top: ABS is standard; thin scalloped seat is well padded; water-cooled 900cc engine looks familiar but is all new.



precise clutch action makes it very easy to make smart getaways from traffic lights or stop signs, even though the 900cc Street Twin engine has just three-quarters of the horsepower (55 horsepower at 5,900rpm) of the outgoing 865cc Bonnie. If you want more, Triumph will refer you to the 1,200cc models coming out shortly.

This explains why Triumph refused to reveal the new 900HT (as in, high torque) engine's power figures at its EICMA show debut, fearing outsiders would assume the only way they could meet Euro 4 requirements was by detuning the bike. That's not the case, as my day's ride proved.

What matters most in real world riding is the claimed 18-percent increase in torque over the outgoing T100 model, peaking at 3,230rpm and 59-foot-pounds and spread widely across the whole rev range — it's really noticeable how much more low down grunt this bike has versus the old. I suspect that in a comparison test with its main rivals in the 800cc-1,000cc retro category — bikes like the BMW R nineT, Harley-Davidson 883 Sportster, Indian Scout 60, Yamaha XV950 Bolt and especially the Ducati Scrambler — the Triumph will be hard to

beat for its overall real world ride-ability in its retuned guise.

That also explains why there's no tachometer incorporated in the Street Twin's single analog instrument with digital info panel, because Triumph's R&D team isn't interested in telling you how many revs the engine is turning at so you can aim for the redline

in each gear. They just want you to go with the flow and relish riding that torque curve, if necessary using the 5-speed gearbox with evenly spaced ratios to do so.

But holding second gear proved an ideal attack mode for long stretches of switch-back Spanish country roads, with the rev limiter only intruding with 70mph shown on the speedometer, and still no vibes from the engine even when pressed as hard as the 105mph I saw briefly in top gear. But the Street Twin really didn't want to be going that fast — 70-80mph top gear cruising is where it's most at home. The five cogs in the gearbox are quite sufficient for something this torquey — I never caught myself looking for another ratio.

Less satisfactory, however, was the rather abrupt pickup from a closed throttle when exiting a turn in second gear.



The new Street Twin shines on the road, with improved low-speed performance thanks to an 18-percent increase in torque.



The 900cc Street Twin (left) will soon be joined by the 1,200cc Thruxton (center) and 1,200cc T120 (right).

It's fine in the other ratios, just noticeable in this one where I suspect the engineers wanted to maximize low-speed pickup and acceleration via some quite aggressive engine mapping.

The Street Twin's handling is capable and confidence inspiring, and much improved over the outgoing model thanks to its considerably tighter steering geometry and especially the 2-inch-shorter wheelbase. The low center of gravity helps it ride bumps well on the angle, and it's extremely agile in flicking from side to side in a succession of curves. In spite of asking just a single 12.2-inch front disc and 10-inch rear, each gripped by a twin-piston Nissin caliper, to stop a bike weighing 435 pounds dry from relatively high speed, I can confirm that the Street Twin's braking package will do the business in a panic stop — blame the Triumph tester I was following who saw the red light only at the last moment, but whom I didn't hit, stopping level with him after the ABS kicked in a couple of times. Phew! The single disc not only reduces cost and speeds up the steering thanks to a reduced gyroscopic effect, but also enhances suspension response by keeping unsprung weight down.

Better suspension

The biggest dynamic improvement in handling terms of the Street Twin over the old cast-wheel Bonneville T100 is in the suspension. Triumph's chassis development guru David Lopez has done a superb job, teaming with Kayaba technicians to produce a twin-shock motorcycle with non-adjustable suspension damping

front and rear that has a level of compliance worthy of a much more expensive and sophisticated variable-rate monoshock bike. Riding through the streets of Valencia at the start of our day's ride, I went looking for manhole covers to test the damping, and was impressed by the way the Triumph ate up the bumps.

For countless years horsepower has ruled as the be all and end all of two-wheeled satisfaction — but the times they are a-changing. With sport bike sales slumping globally for all sorts of reasons, replaced in motorcyclists' affection by naked bikes, torque twins like the new family of Triumph Bonnevilles are becoming increasingly mainstream models, appealing to a different kind of rider who arguably now represents a motorcycle dealer's core customer.

He or she will want to personalize the bike via Triumph's 150-strong list of dealer accessories, or customize it beyond that. The Street Twin's stripped-back styling, distinctive sound and dynamic riding experience, enhanced by the addition of electronic riding aids including switchable ABS and traction control plus a ride-by-wire throttle, make it a successful modern reinterpretation of Triumph's most iconic model on the 60th birthday of the feat which led to its creation. Sixty years since Johnny Allen set a two-wheeled World Land Speed record of 214.40mph on the Bonneville Salt Flats in a streamliner powered by a twin-cylinder 650cc Triumph engine, Triumph has given the bike that commemorates that achievement an emphatic and welcome new lease of life. Job well done, chaps. **MC**

The Street Twin is down on horsepower from the outgoing T100, but it soaks up two-lane twisties thanks to increased torque and better handling.



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CULT CLASSIC

1985 Suzuki GS1150E





Story by Margie Siegal
Photos by Nick Cedar

With 119 horsepower at 8,500rpm and torque to match — 81 foot-pounds at 6,500rpm — the GS1150E was strong, reliable and fast, and was quickly drafted as the basis for numerous race-winning and record-breaking dragsters. Never built in large numbers, stock survivors are now rare.

This particular bike is doubly rare. It has not only survived in stock condition for the last 31 years, it is completely original except for the tires. Unlike many rarities, it is also practical transportation. All these years later, the GS1150E is still a comfortable long-distance cruiser. “I think what is special about this bike is that it’s a wolf in sheep’s clothing,” says owner Zeki Abed. “It can be ridden as a cruiser or a dragster.”

Saving bacon

Up to the mid-1970s, Suzuki Motors concentrated almost exclusively on 2-strokes — until two events convinced the company to change course: American and European environmental regulation and the Suzuki RE5 Rotary debacle. Suzuki had poured huge resources into the Rotary, only to discover the buying public wasn’t interested. Facing disaster, management quickly pivoted to the 4-cylinder, 4-stroke GS750, which was introduced in late 1976. It was a good decision: Once the buying public discovered that the GS not only handled well, but was reliable and comfortable to ride, it sold like hotcakes — and saved Suzuki’s bacon.

The GS750 set the pattern for Suzuki engines for the next few years, employing a roller bearing crank and using double overhead camshafts operating two valves per cylinder on shim and bucket tappets. It had a nice, stiff, double-cradle frame, twin rear shocks and a disc brake up front. It was soon joined by a 1,000cc big brother that proved to be equally reliable and a little more powerful. Suzuki had hit on a winning combination.

In 1980 Suzuki released the first major mechanical upgrade of the GS since its introduction, replacing the original 2-valve top end with a 4-valve cylinder head. The engine was enlarged to 1,074cc and the combustion chamber was reworked to make it more efficient. For years, hemispherical cylinder combustion chambers — hemi heads — were considered to be the acme of engine efficiency. But more recent research had determined that engine efficiency could be improved by going to four valves per cylinder and using a combustion chamber shaped more like a house roof. Suzuki’s Twin Swirl Combustion chamber design was essentially a modification of this “pent roof” design, to which was added a raised ridge running along the combustion chamber roof parallel to the gas flow of the inlet charge. This was to encourage controlled swirl of the incoming fuel-air charge in order to increase the fuel burn speed through better flame front propagation.

Yet exceptional as the engine was, the GS1100’s plain-vanilla styling was hardly winning hearts, so for 1981 Suzuki went for head-snapping design. At a time when other motorcycle companies were releasing chopper-replica “customs,” Suzuki introduced the then-radical Katana. Penned by Target Design of Germany on the GS1100 platform, the Katana was 180 degrees from bland — enthusiasts either loved or hated the look — and elements of its design have been used in many sport bikes built since.



1985 SUZUKI GS1150E

Engine: 1,135cc air-cooled inline four, 74mm x 66mm bore and stroke, 9.7:1 compression ratio, 119hp @ 8,500rpm

Top speed: 145.86 mph (period test)

Carburetion: Four 36mm Mikuni CV

Transmission: 5-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Box-section cradle frame/61in (1,594mm)

Suspension: 37mm air-assist telescopic forks w/ adjustable preload and anti-dive front, monoshock w/ adjustable preload and rebound damping rear

Brakes: Dual 10.8in (274mm) discs front, single 10.8in (274mm) disc rear

Tires: 110/90 x 16in front, 130/90 x 17in rear

Weight (full tank): 561lb (254kg)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 5.3gal (20ltr)/34-46 mpg

Price then/now: \$4,399/\$2,000-\$5,000



Market crisis

Suzuki also faced another challenge. In 1982 the U.S. economy went sour, and sales of bikes nosedived. Honda and Yamaha had been fighting each other for U.S. market supremacy, and were selling bikes below cost, trying to make inroads in each other's customer base. Harley-Davidson, newly liberated from AMF, successfully petitioned Congress to protect its market by putting tariffs on large-bore imported motorcycles, pointing to the below-cost sales as just cause. When the new tariffs went into effect for the 1984 model year, they significantly raised the cost of imported bikes over 700cc.

Suzuki's response was to slash its 1984 model line to three road bikes and six dirt bikes, and offer discounts on unsold 1982 and 1983 machines. New for 1984 was the GS1150ES, with Katana

inspired styling, a monoshock rear suspension, triple disc brakes, a 16-inch front wheel and an anti-dive system for the front forks.

The motorcycle magazines took note, and they all took the new GS through its paces. *Motorcyclist* magazine recorded a quarter-mile time of 10.47 seconds at 128.02mph on their GS, faster than any previous production bike. *Cycle World* dismantled and inspected the engine

on their test bike, noting its enlarged wristpins and intake ports. They were impressed with its wide powerband, calling it "a tractable rocket." Demerits were given for a power surge at 60mph, brakes that "lacked feel," vibration between 60 and 65mph, and the GS' sheer size and weight. "This isn't a motorcycle that's snapped easily into a fast sweeping turn or rifled up a set of S-turns," the magazine quipped.





Cycle put the new GS through extensive road testing. The editors liked the easy starting, the good running during chilly mornings and the neutral steering. They didn't like the heavy footing through turns or the vibration, which was found to smooth out around 85mph. That, however, was a speed that "suits the Suzuki well; the engine vibration calms down and the oncoming blast of air provides needed support for the forward leaning pilot," *Cycle* said. Law abiding riders could expect over 50 miles per gallon, a figure that dropped to less than 40 under "spirited riding."

Against the competition

In a comparison test, *Cycle Guide* pitted the GS1150ES against the Kawasaki 750 Turbo and Ninja, Honda's VF1000F Interceptor and V65 Sabre, and the Yamaha FJ1100 in straight line and racetrack speed tests. The Suzuki came in second in the quarter-mile behind the FJ1100, but posted mid-pack in dry lake top speed at 142.62 mph. *Rider* took the GS and the competition out on the road and concluded that the GS was a little more on the touring end of the spectrum than the competition, which, for *Rider*, was a good thing. "For many of us, a big, fast, comfortable and relaxed motorcycle is just the ticket for sport touring."

For 1985, the GS1150E debuted in Suzuki's lineup, minus the ES's half fairing (the fairing was available as an option), and with some well-thought-out upgrades. Taller handlebars resulted in a more ergonomic position for many riders. The excessive vibration was gone, possibly due to the deletion of the fairing, and wider wheels and a different tire compound resulted in a more nimble machine that was much more at home on twisty roads than the 1984 version, and with no loss of stability. Demerits were issued for the high effort necessary to work the front brake and an anti-dive system that caused some scary moments on rough roads.

Time and engineering developments stop for no one, and Suzuki kept the big GS around for one more year while rolling out its soon-to-be replacement, the GSX, an air/oil cooled 1100, available in several different configurations from full-tilt street racer to sporty tourer. By 1987, the GS was gone.



Owner Zeki Abed on the GS1150E. A one-owner bike, it was basically in the condition seen here when he bought it.

Anti-dive forks were all the rage in the early 1980s (far right). Suzuki's PDF anti-dive was considered less than perfect, often stiffening up the forks on bumps even when no braking was applied.

Yesterday and today

Over the years, the GS1150E has become something of a cult classic. It's styling, once considered garish, instantly places it in its Eighties birth era. Considered hard and angular when new, next to some present-day machinery the GS looks positively soft. Like the Airhead BMWs of the same era, 30 years have not erased the GS's virtues as a sturdy, all-purpose motorcycle, one that will happily and reliably get a rider to work, take a couple on a weeklong vacation and stand up to determined canyon carving.

Zeki Abed has always liked Suzukis and has quite a few. "I have a GT750 Water Buffalo, a GT550 and this GS1150E. The GS is a great bike," he says. Like most collectors, Zeki loves the chase almost as much as he loves his bikes. "I was buying a Kawasaki KH350, and the seller says, 'I know someone with a mint Suzuki GT380.' Well, I looked the guy up, and not only did he have the 380, he had this bike. It had a Yoshimura pipe and Mikuni carburetors, but it was otherwise stock. I said that I would have more interest if the bike was completely stock, since the exhaust system is really hard to find. The next day I get an email with a photo. The stock pipes and carbs were neatly laid out on the floor. Everything was there; it had been stored in a box in a closed container, so it was in mint original condition, as new from the day the owner had removed the pipes and carbs, one year after he had bought the bike," Zeki says, still amazed at his good luck. The GS had only been owned by one person, and the only reason he was selling it was because he was ill. "I knew this was a rare opportunity, so I picked up all three bikes at the same time."

The only restoration the GS needed was replacing the non-stock items with the stock parts, and it is now running well. Zeki has a large stable and has just bought this bike, and as a result he has only ridden the GS a couple of times between shining it up and taking it to shows: It won first place in class at the San Jose (California) Clubman show in March 2015.

So far, Zeki's impressions echo the test bike riders of the 1980s. "You really notice the headlight. It has a headlight the size of a lighthouse beacon. The seat and riding position is one of the most comfortable in my collection. This bike has a lot of top end power, yet it is also pretty good about gas. It gets about 50 miles a gallon. I love lighter bikes, but this is a better outfit for cruising and long distance. It's also the best bike I own for two-up riding."

Zeki owns a trouble-free 1987 Suzuki GSXR1100, and expects that the repair frequency and the maintenance on this bike will be very similar to the GSXR's. "The engine is bullet-proof. The only thing you really need to do is ride the bike. I



check the fluids and keep the new fuel from clogging the carbs by using fuel stabilizer. I keep the carbs dry if I am not going to use the bike for a while," Zeki says.

"They used these engines on the drag strips in the Eighties and Nineties, which is why you don't see a lot of them," Zeki continues. "It is a really strong engine. The styling was daring in its day, and it's still unique now, with the trapezoidal instruments and lights and the little design quirks. One especially unique and functional design quirk that really finishes it off is the dual black-striped rubberized plastic tank protectors that Suzuki designers incorporated into the final product."

"I remember this bike back in the day. I always thought of it as the 'Tron Bike,' with the angular, futuristic look," Zeki says. "I didn't like it at the time, but over time I got into it, and now it appeals a lot to me. Most Japanese bikes of that era had a more traditional and classic styling. Suzuki took a jump in the opposite direction with its trapezoidal instrument clusters and taillight and its angular tanks — 'Tron-like' characteristics."

"I find it really appealing. I love this bike because it is so unique in its design. It firmed up Suzuki's reputation as a builder of powerhouse machinery and set the scene for the GSXR series, which took the motorcycle world by storm in 1986." **MC**

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GHOST IN THE MACHINE

The Ducati Utah prototype

Story by Hamish Cooper

Photos by Phil Aynsley

Q Quick. Name a few rare Ducatis: The 1993 Supermono? OK, sure, many of us have heard of that one. The original 1973 Green Frame 750SS? Yeah, that one, too. OK, how about the Utah? Never heard of it? You're not alone.

Somebody should script a movie about the labyrinthine politics of the Ducati factory in the 1970s, because it would be almost as riveting as the 1972 film *The Godfather*. The trouble is, like *The Godfather*, the plotline is so all-consuming you'd have to make it into a series.

One subplot to the amazing 1970s transformation of the Ducati factory is this soft off-roader. Dubbed the Utah, it was aimed squarely at the U.S. market, yet it was only ever shown in Europe, and then quietly tucked away into a corner of Ducati's Bologna factory.

Now, nearly 40 years later, we persuaded the Ducati museum to pull it out of the storeroom, dust it down and allow it to be photographed. Amazed at our luck? Amazed that the factory would hold such an icon out of view? So are we. But to delve into the reality of all this we need to go back in time to the mid-1970s.

History lesson

In late 1974, some corporate bright spark decided Ducati should abandon all its established models and replace them with untested, clean-sheet designs that would cover all market segments.

Forget the steadily selling overhead-camshaft singles and V-twins aimed primarily at a niche of devoted road riders. Let's build enduro 2-strokes, a futuristic-looking square-case V-twin grand tourer, and then some chain-driven, overhead cam parallel twins and singles. Yeah? Oh, yeah.

The result was a confusing period of declining sales and rickety motorcycle development that was only retrieved when the 860GT V-twin was redesigned into the Darmah and the belt-driven overhead cam Pantah series arrived in 1979. Meanwhile, the factory went through three managers in as many years.

The Utah was the love child of this crazy era, conceived by charismatic designer Fabio Taglioni and his small team of backroom boffins. Ignoring all the boardroom shenanigans going on above them, they quietly and efficiently worked away on prototypes. These would eventually produce the Pantah series, which is the basic architecture of all of Ducati's present-day models, up until the Panigale.

Like many factory engineers before and since, Dr. T's team played around with variations of their original ideas to see what would work and what wouldn't. This even included supercharging a 350cc version of the Pantah

The Utah featured lightweight Campagnolo wheels with Brembo discs front and rear (right).

Indian feathers in the tank decal were a nod to the Utah's intended U.S. market (far right).



L-twin. Perhaps the most radical was a design that predated the Ducati Supermono by two decades. They took one cylinder off the prototype Pantah engine to create a single. That eventually morphed into the street-scrambler Utah, which, if you look closely at the photos, has some styling hints of Ducati's latest Scrambler model, especially the seat and rear fender treatment.

Single-minded

The surviving 1977 Utah prototype shown here could lay claim to being Ducati's rarest model destined for production. Both the Utah and its street sibling, the Rollah, were displayed at trade expos and intended for full production, but never got past the running prototype stage. The Rollah has since disappeared, so we only have the Utah to examine.

Taglioni, and a few other like-minded visionaries, had definite views about the direction Ducati management was going, but it wasn't until the dust had settled in the late 1980s that one of them spilled the beans. Massimo Bordi, who had started at Ducati in 1978 straight out of university, was now the factory's technical director.

"There should have been a single-cylinder design for a new Scrambler," Bordi told an Italian journalist. "It would have been perfectly in keeping with the history and needs of the range. No one had to stop production of the Scrambler in 1975," he said. The Scrambler 450 was described by U.S. motorcycle magazine

testers as "a pleasant mix between the European and American schools of motorcycling."

"That single could have continued and it could have protected the company from the setbacks it has suffered. Instead we closed off the single-cylinder, made a terrible parallel twin, and then were left with the Pantah, before we finally stopped the bevel (in 1986). We created a little confusion," he concluded.

Years later in another interview, Bordi would describe Ducati's 1970s parallel twins as "delusional." By this time he had developed 4-valve heads and liquid-cooling for the L-twins, and then the delectable Supermono of the early 1990s.

Man on a mission

In Taglioni's view, a belt-driven, overhead-cam desmo design was the future for Ducati. Easier and cheaper to manufacture than the complicated existing bevel-drive V-twin, it also employed Dr. T's latest ideas on performance efficiency. This technology could be applied to a range of engines in different sizes of twins and singles.

When the 500cc Pantah L-twin came out it blew existing conceptions of engine capacity versus performance out the window. The robust, high-revving little twin also blew motorcycles twice its physical size into the weeds.





The twin may have been the future, but it wasn't a great leap of logic to plan a single-cylinder version. As far back as the early 1970s, Dr. T had experimented with a bevel-drive, 4-valve, single-cylinder overhead-cam version of the existing single. Later he built up another single-cylinder engine based on a bevel V-twin minus the front cylinder. It's been claimed these experiments resulted in a near 50 horsepower 450cc engine that could have powered an Italian rival to Honda's XL and Yamaha's XT. That engine output equaled the production Pantah L-twin in 500cc form.

There was also another experiment using the old bevel single's crankcases with a belt-driven overhead cam system (the belt system was on the left, the other side of the engine than the later production Pantah twin). That engine ended up in an entirely different motorcycle that we will talk about later.

Rollah on

Meanwhile, Ducati was gearing up to launch the pre-production version of its ground-breaking 500cc L-twin Pantah. That happened at the end of 1977 when the Pantah was displayed at the Milan show along with two smaller, single-cylinder versions. The road model was called the Rollah and the street-scrambler version the Utah.

Interestingly, the cam-belt-drive was now on the right side of the single-cylinder engine, just like the Pantah twin, rather than on the left as on the earlier experimental version. The crankcases also looked to be based on the Pantah's. This was in line with Dr.

T holding strong to his belief that a modular engine range would guarantee Ducati's survival.

At the time, Ducati was part of the EFIM group, a government finance corporation that controlled a cross-section of Italian manufacturers and had no great love of motorcycles. Company officials had to tread warily regarding investment and marketing as there was every chance EFIM might shut up shop for them, whether it was a motorcycle, car, ship or tractor factory.

The unexpected success of the small Pantah against big-bore European and Japanese rivals saved Ducati, but the price paid was the stillbirth of the even smaller Utah and Rollah. The sad thing is that there wasn't much wrong with the design of these baby singles.

An 83mm bore and 64mm stroke gave an engine capacity of 346cc. A 30mm Dell'Orto carburetor hinted at serious head flow and claimed output was 27 horsepower at 7,000rpm, with peak torque at 3,500rpm. By contrast, the 500cc Pantah twin (74mm bore and 58mm stroke), finally released in 1979, produced 45 horsepower at 9,000rpm using 36mm carbs.

The 1977 Pantah and Rollah prototypes both featured the styling of the existing 500 Sport parallel twin. But, in the case of the Pantah at least, this was a ruse to confuse journalists (and possibly its own financial masters) about how deeply committed Ducati's management was to produce a dashing, risky, all-new model. The production Pantah arrived on the market in 1979 with entirely different bodywork.



The Utah's 346cc belt-drive desmodromic single was essentially half of a Pantah V-twin.



Fabio Taglioni developed a 4-valve twin-cam 450cc single from an 860 V-twin (left). The Rollah prototype (right).

The Rollah, painted blue, weighed 341 pounds (155 kilograms), and from a distance looked like a “mini-me” Darmah, perfect for its target market, the entry-level motorcyclist with a hankering for a big V-twin. The Utah was 22 pounds (10 kilograms) lighter and had styling all its own. This started with black and gold paintwork, and included an all-black engine. A voluminous mesh air cleaner took up a large area under the seat, along with the cantilever rear suspension that made the rear look as if it was floating.

The delicate Campagnolo alloy wheels were 21-inch front and 18-inch rear and shod with Pirelli trials-type tires. Fenders were heavy-duty plastic, high-mounted at the rear but low at the front. Like the Rollah, brakes were Brembo discs all round with twin front discs, unusual for an offroad motorcycle. Marzocchi suspension included a state-of-the-art pressurized rear-shock. It also had electric-starting (as did the Rollah) and reliable Japanese Nippon Denso electrics.

This machine didn't follow the conventional look of, say, a contemporary Honda XL. In fact, it looked pretty soft by comparison, but who's to say that it wouldn't have provided another alternative to U.S. riders who wanted that “pleasant mix” of European and American motorcycle tastes described by testers of the original Ducati Scrambler.

Even the badging made an alternative statement: Honda and Yamaha wouldn't have thought of at the time. Two feathers stick cheekily out from behind the spaghetti western-style “Utah” lettering, a nod to American Western history. The Utah's chief designer, Leopoldo Tartarini, also had his name inscribed on a lower part of the gas tank.

Who knows how many of these features, including the lightweight street wheels and triple discs, would have made it into production for a U.S.-focused model, but Ducati clearly had more faith in the Utah than the Rollah.

Death of an idea

The Rollah was never shown again, but the Utah was displayed on the Ducati stand at a major motor

show in Paris in late 1978. Not long after, the announcement came that the two projects had been abandoned. Only the Utah prototype survives, held in Ducati's museum.

However there is another chapter in this intriguing tale. Soon after the demise of the Utah, Mototrans, Ducati's Spanish manufacturing partner, launched its first complete “in-house” design. Called the Yak 410, this scrambler's engine bore a close resemblance to one of Ducati's pre-Pantah prototypes. This had been loosely based on an early 1970s single, but with highly modified crankcases and a belt cam drive to a Pantah-like head (but on the other side of the engine than the later production Pantah twin).

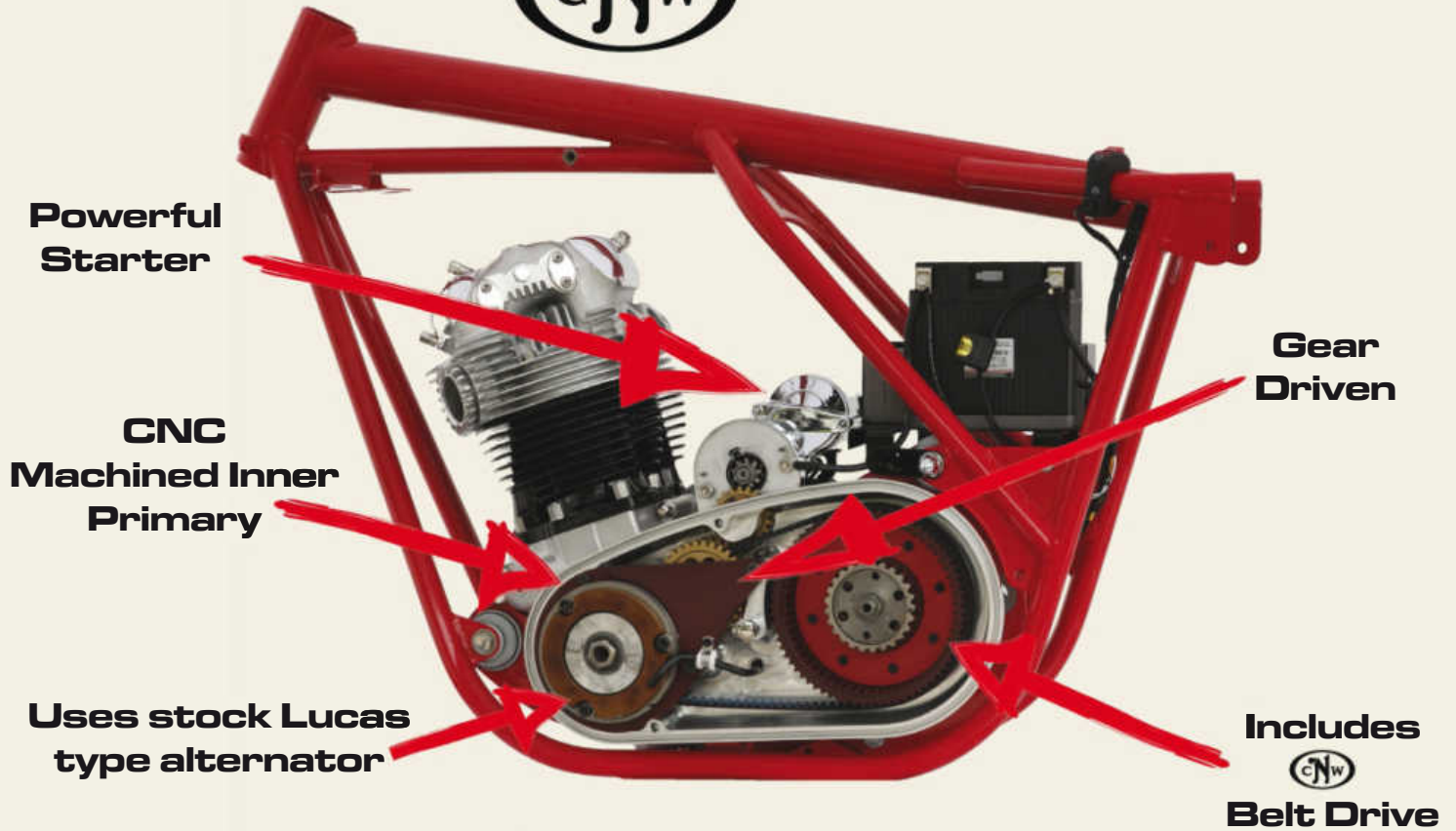
Housed in what looked like a Mototrans Forza road frame, it was later revealed that this was in fact a Mototrans prototype that had predated the Yak 410. Interesting. The Yak's 406cc single-cylinder engine (86mm bore and 70mm stroke) had desmo heads with belt-driven cams on the left side. It developed a claimed 38 horsepower at 8,000rpm. Only about 80 were manufactured in a two-year production run, and they had proper enduro styling. Not quite a Utah, perhaps the Yak 410 was the ghost of the original idea. **MC**



Mototrans in Spain built perhaps 80 Yak 410s. Power came from a Ducati-esque desmo single.



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MIX AND MATCH

Norton Commando “Interback” custom

Story and photos by Robert Smith

When Jim Bush decided to take a stock Commando and turn it into a custom using only Norton factory components, he actually had quite a few to choose from: The Interback was the result.

Over its eight-year, almost 100,000-unit production run, the Norton Commando came in many different guises. All of them rolled on what was essentially the same chassis, drivetrain, suspension and wheels, with the later addition of disc brakes and electric start.

As our model-by-model call-out on Page 53 underscores, the differences were primarily in the bodywork, the handlebars, the exhaust system and the seats, all of which are easily removable and replaceable. That means Commandos are perfect for customizing, so could you create a unique, cohesive, custom Commando using only factory original parts? That's what Jim Bush of Langley, British Columbia, wanted to find out.

The Commando “Interback” project

The Interback project started with a 1971 Commando Roadster. Bush first found the bike as a rolling basket case in 1994 and bought it with the intention of restoring it. It was advertised as “original, needs work,” but when Bush went to see it, he







1971 NORTON COMMANDO 750 "INTERBACK"

Engine: 745cc air-cooled OHV parallel twin, 73mm x 89mm bore and stroke, 9:1 compression ratio, 58hp @ 6,800rpm

Top speed: 115mph (est.)

Carburetion: Dual Amal 932 Concentric

Transmission: 4-speed, chain final drive

Electrics: 12-volt, Power Arc electronic ignition

Frame/wheelbase: Dual-downtube steel cradle with Isolastic system/56.75in (1,441mm)

Suspension: Norton Roadholder telescopic forks front, dual shocks w/adjustable preload rear

Brakes: 8in (203mm) TLS drums front and rear

Tires: 4.10 x 19in front and rear

Weight (dry): 400lb (182kg), approx.

Seat height: 31in (787mm)

Fuel capacity/MPG: 6gal (22.7ltr)

Price then/now (stock): \$1,595/\$3,000-\$13,000



The engine is a standard Commando 750 unit, but wearing a modified and gas-flowed cylinder head for better performance over stock.

on the engine, fitting a modified and gas-flowed cylinder head from Norton specialist Jim Comstock (nortonmachineshop.com), high-compression pistons and performance 4S-grind camshaft, together with re-sleeved carburetors and a Boyer ignition. The stock timed breather system was augmented with a nonreturn PCV valve for positive crankcase

venting to reduce oil leaks.

The bike wore stock Roadster bodywork plus a Corbin seat, but with special metal flake paint on the gas tank and side panels — applied by Jim Bush. Duffett's Roadster was a show

quickly realized it had been on the way to becoming a chopper before its owner lost interest. It had a beer keg gas tank, a tombstone taillight and the chain guard had been cut to allow a wider 16-inch rear wheel. It had been "stored" for 12 years, and the jugs had been "punched," he was told. On the plus side, the frame, engine and gearbox were all matching numbers.

Bush got as far as getting the engine running, then consigned the bike to the back of his shop for later consideration. It languished there for a number of years as other projects took priority before he sold it to Tony Duffett in 2005. (Duffett's Commando R was featured in the January/February 2008 issue of *Motorcycle Classics*).

Duffett completely dismantled the Commando and started





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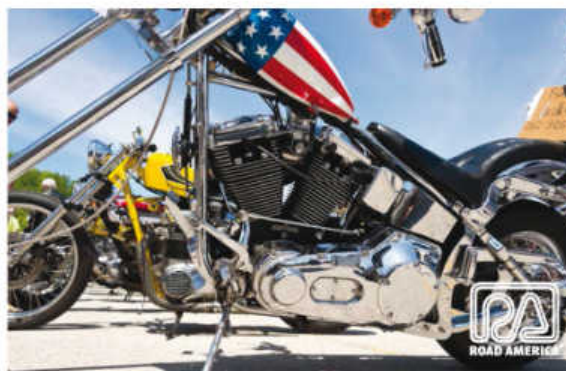


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Owner Jim Bush aboard his custom "modernized" Norton, the Interback.



winner, taking first in class at the Tsawwassen, BC, Classic & Vintage Show 'n Shine in 2013. Sadly, Duffett passed away in December that year. "He called me in October from the hospice and asked me to find a home for his bikes," Bush says. "I immediately said I would make a home for the '71, and then found a home for the R amongst his friends."

As a good friend, Bush knew the bike would always be "Tony's" while it was still in its Roadster finish. So he decided to donate the gas tank to Duffett's widow Laura as a memento, and he donated one of the side panels to a group of Duffett's riding friends. "The purple metal flake takes some getting used to, and always had been identified as Tony's bike, something I needed to respect; yet I wanted a daily rider that would still honor his meticulous work. The other side cover is on a stand in my shop as a reminder," Bush says.

Blank slate

So Bush now owned a fully restored 1971 Commando without bodywork. Rather than build yet another stock Commando, Bush decided to set himself a challenge: Could he create a satisfactory custom Commando using only factory parts? The "Interback" was the result.

To start, Bush decided he wanted to use a fiberglass Interstate tank. Interstate tanks came in two sizes in steel as well as in fiberglass, the latter outlawed in the U.S. around 1973. "This was after ordering in an Indian-made metal Interstate tank. I found it was so poorly made that it had no place on the bike. It failed the 20-ton press test," jokes Bush, "rendering it scrap."

The seat originated on a Fastback LR, though Bush has



The Interback began here, with a fully restored 1971 Norton Commando 750.



High-mounted exhaust uses SS headers married to Interstate mufflers (left). Gas tank comes from an Interstate.

shortened it by about 1 inch to accommodate the larger Interstate tank. The tailpiece is from a regular Fastback, and the side covers are from a Roadster.

Complementing the café look is a pair of headers from an SS model, fitted with mufflers intended for a 1972 Interstate. The finishing touch is a set of rearset footpegs from Norvil (norvilmotorcycle.co.uk).

The result is a spectacular custom machine that looks like it came from the pen of a top Italian designer. The unusual combination of components looks just right — and works beautifully — and the 6-gallon gas tank gives a range of over 300 miles.

Most recently, Bush has also updated the Interback to provide a better “user interface,” with an electric starter kit from Alton (alton-france.com). The Alton kit includes a new inner primary case that carries the starter. “The Alton starter works like a dream,” Bush says, noting that it was only “a two-hour install.”

Bush also fitted a Power Arc ignition system with switchable ignition curves, from Old Britts (oldbritts.com). “I wanted to make sure the voltage drop issues with the older generation

Boyer were avoided to eliminate the possibility of kickbacks,” Bush says. “This has woken up the motor somewhat as well. It runs absolutely perfectly, and idles so smooth.”

For the future, a Norton-Lockheed disc front brake is in the plan to replace the original drum, combined with a sleeved-down master cylinder using a kit from RGM for extra stopping power (rgmnorton.co.uk). The smaller bore also improves brake feel. The front forks will benefit from a Lansdowne cartridge valve conversion (lansdowne-engineering.co.uk).

“I love the comfort of the wide LR Fastback seat,” Bush says. “The rearsets put the feet in the right position, and an inch and a quarter chopped off each side of the stock Interstate handlebars makes it feel very comfortable on the arms. The high pipes and Interstate mufflers sound rich, with a nice bark!”

“My plan was to build a modernized Norton, staying away from all the usual café bolt-on bits that abound on the Internet. With the disc brake, upgraded suspension, electric starter, comfortable seat, large capacity gas tank and tool storage in the tail piece, it will retain its classic character and good looks — and be a bike that is ridden.” Amen to that. **MC**



Norton Commando: Models explained

The first Commando became known later as the Fastback. Shown at London's Earls Court exhibition in September 1967, the Commando used a fiberglass gas tank and a tan-colored seat unit with "ears" that extended forward along the side of the tank. A tapered tail unit blended into the Lucas taillight. Mufflers were borrowed from Norton's own Atlas, and

the exposed oil tank (no side cover) was carried on the right side. Though many aficionados are unaware of this, the Fastback continued to be available until 1973, though by this time using the oil tank, side panels and peashooter mufflers from the Roadster.

The 1969 R used the basic Fastback layout but with a new fiberglass gas tank and a conventional seat. The 1969 S capitalized on the then-hot Street Scrambler look. The S moved the oil tank to the center of the frame, using triangular side covers to fill in the space. The seat and gas tank were from the R model. The S featured a chrome "halo" headlight ring, and a pair of chrome peashooter mufflers mounted high on the left side behind chrome-plated heat shields.

To many enthusiasts, the 1971 Roadster is the definitive Commando. It used the R/S gas tank, and a repositioned oil tank fitted behind the right hand side panel. The headlight was a conventional 7-inch unit and the header pipes fed into upswept peashooter mufflers.

The 1971 SS used a smaller "peanut" fiberglass gas tank, abbreviated dual seat, sprung front fender, smaller headlight and braced motocross handlebars. An elegantly curved waist-level header pipe ran along each side of the bike, terminating in short peashooter mufflers.

The 1971 Hi-Rider was a factory chopper for the U.S. market. It used the same "peanut" fiberglass tank as the SS and had high-rise bars and a backrest with a sissy-bar built into the seat.

The 1971 Production Racer was a limited-edition race bike with a blueprinted and carefully assembled engine featuring high-compression pistons, cylinder head modified for better flow, factory 3S race camshaft, shortened pushrods and larger valves, among other improvements.

The 1972 Interstate featured the tuned "Combat" 750cc engine with a claimed 65 horsepower, a 5-gallon fiberglass gas tank, new trapezoidal side covers and a shorter seat. Header pipes fed into slen-

der "cigar" mufflers, kept low to facilitate the fitting of side luggage.

The limited-edition 1974 Norton John Player Special was a standard Commando 850 with bodywork designed by Mick Oilfield and inspired by Norton's factory racers. An estimated 200 were built. A few were supposedly built with the short-stroke 750cc race engine used in the factory racers.

Only the Roadster and Interstate survived to 1975, the final year of full production and the last year for Norton in the U.S. — Robert Smith

Norton Commando Models:

- ① The original 1968 Fastback
- ② High-pipe S introduced 1969
- ③ One-year-only 1969 R
- ④ Roadster introduced in 1971
- ⑤ One-year-only 1971 SS
- ⑥ Hi-Rider introduced in 1971
- ⑦ 1971 Production Racer
- ⑧ Interstate introduced in 1972
- ⑨ 1974 John Player Special



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SUPER STREET HOG

Harley-Davidson VR1000 road test

Story by Alan Cathcart
Photos by Kel Edge

In 1994, with Harley-Davidson's production of the motorcycles that made Milwaukee famous about to break the 100,000 annual barrier for the first time, America's Finest had a new, radically different "street" bike in its catalog: the VR1000 Superbike.

For the first time ever, you could buy a V-twin Harley road bike that was A) liquid-cooled, B) had anything other than a 45-degree angle between the cylinders, C) used some means other than pushrods to work the valves, and D) could break the 55mph speed limit in second gear.

The fastest street-legal production motorcycle ever made in America could have been yours for just \$49,490, a huge sum back then, in exchange for which you had to promise you'd

never ride it on the streets of America. Poland was OK, however, because that's where the street version of the bike that brought H-D back to road racing in 1994 was homologated for everyday use. After all, American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) Superbike rules didn't say WHERE a bike had to be approved for street use for it to qualify for homologation, and you had to build at least 50 bikes with lights and a number plate — then go racing.

Clean sheet

That's just what Harley did with the VR1000, which formed the basis of an 8-year AMA Superbike campaign from 1994 to 2001 in the hands of such star riders as Miguel Duhamel, Doug Chandler, Chris Carr, Pascal Picotte and former World Superbike champion Scott Russell. The effort yielded one pole position, two second-place finishes and a handful of thirds — but no race wins.

Harley started with a clean sheet of paper in 1987 when it decided to concoct the Motor Company's return to road racing.



1994 HARLEY-DAVIDSON VR1000 STREET

Engine: 996cc water-cooled 8-valve DOHC 60-degree V-twin, 98mm x 66mm bore and stroke, 10.8:1 compression ratio, 135hp @ 10,000rpm (at crankshaft)
Top speed: 165mph
Fueling: Weber/Marelli EFI, two 54mm throttle bodies w/single injector per cylinder
Transmission: 5-speed, chain final drive
Electrics: 12v, electronic ignition
Frame/wheelbase: Aluminum twin-spar frame/55.5in (1,410mm)
Suspension: 46mm fully adjustable Öhlins inverted telescopic forks front, fully adjustable Penske monoshock rear
Brakes: Twin 12.2in (310mm) discs front, single 8.3in (210mm) disc rear
Tires: 120/70 x 17in front, 185/55 x 17in rear
Weight (dry): 389.4lb (177kg)
Seat height: NA
Fuel capacity: 4.5gal (17ltr)
Price then/now: \$49,490/\$60,000-\$80,000



Not your father's Harley: The VR1000 used Weber/Marelli electronic fuel injection with twin throttle bodies.

Harley opted for a compact, water-cooled, 60-degree V-twin eight-valve 996cc engine with Weber/Marelli fuel injection and chain drive to the double overhead camshafts per cylinder.

Adapting the racer to road use involved only detail changes to the basic engine package: The roadster's inlet camshaft was used for the exhaust side on the racer, so the street bike had an even softer exhaust cam; there was a different exhaust system that was surprisingly quiet even at full bore; and of course the Marelli-Weber EFI's engine management system had a new EPROM chip to suit all this. But the result was still a bike that delivered 135 horsepower at the gearbox at 10,000rpm.

The Superbike racer had ported, flowed inlets with a different manifold and longer velocity stacks on the 54mm throttle bodies; the same forged pistons but domed to offer a higher 12:1 compression than the roadster's 10.8:1; stiffer valve springs for 10,200rpm-plus engine speeds; and larger diameter inlet valve guides, all giving 147 horsepower at 10,400rpm.

The VR1000 twin-cam engine provided the basis for development of the similar Porsche-developed engine in the Harley-Davidson VRSCA V-Rod that debuted in 2002, and although the trickle of VR1000 street bikes were sold all over the world to countries other than the U.S., they're a rare sight today.

But what is a VR1000 like on the road? We set out on a 250-mile ride on Wisconsin country roads in the heart of America's dairy land, including a quick blast around Blackhawk Farms Raceway and ending with a freeway ride to Milwaukee at high speeds, to find out.

The American Ducati?

Who knew that it was possible more than 20 years ago to build a fuel-injected V-twin sport bike somewhere other than Bologna that delivered performance with practicality and fun as well as function?

In spite of its racetrack heritage — let's face it, this was even more of a homologation special, a true racer with lights,

than a Ducati 916SP — the Harley proved to be a thoroughly usable everyday ride. It pulls cleanly from 35mph in top (fifth) gear, yet a mere halfway to its 10,400rpm redline was already travelling at 80mph. It is a true 160mph-plus motorcycle that is happy to plonk around at 3,000-5,000rpm in heavy traffic — but just show it an open road, twist that wrist and hold on tight!

The VR roadster has a good riding position, with higher-set handlebars than on the pure race bike version. Both use the same Öhlins upside-down forks, but on the road bike they are dropped through the upper triple clamp, allowing the clip-on handlebars to be bolted above that. You feel less perched on top of the Harley and more a part of it than on a contemporary Ducati 916, the bike it was obviously going to be compared with, having debuted the same month that VR1000 production began.

You get good protection from the VR1000's unusually-shaped screen at almost any speed. Sit up and it deflects a lot of the wind blast off your body, but squat down a little and it gives you an envelope to tuck your head into. The seat becomes a little board-like after 100 miles or so, but by then you might need to think about stopping for gas anyway, if you'd been riding it hard. And the temptation to do so is very



High weight worked against the VR1000 on the track, but it was a great sport bike.



The VR1000's twin-spar frame was designed by Harris Performance in England but manufactured by Alcoa in the U.S.

real, because the VR delivers performance to go — more than any other motorcycle ever made in Milwaukee had done when it debuted, and in a more invigorating way than most contemporary products of Japan Inc.

Fire it up

Twist the ignition key one click to the right, then another click to put the headlamp on, thumb the starter and get ready to be seduced. The VR1000's engine note has a unique character. In spite of its racing heritage it catches instantly from cold, then settles into a throaty rumble as the car-derived Marelli EFI auto-choke helps warm it up, amid a clatter of clutch plates and assorted gear noise. There is hardly any vibration thanks to the 1.75-pound counter-balancer (gear-driven off the crankshaft) that more than earns its keep.

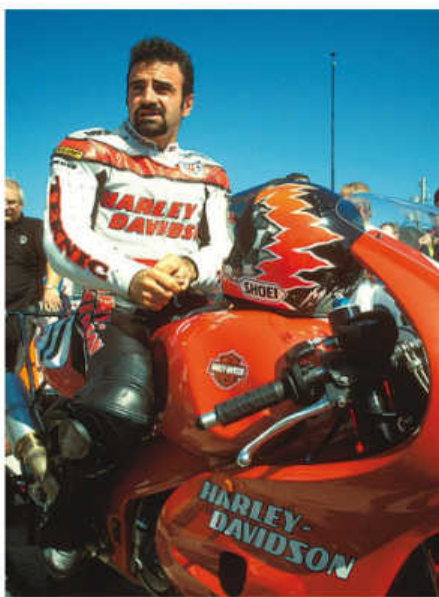
Blip the throttle and watch the revs mount quickly on the large analog tachometer. The digital readout beneath the tach allows you to scroll through three pages of data by flicking the headlamp flasher switch on the left handlebar. Page 1 gives you the speed, mileage and trip; Page 2 gives you

pressure, oil temp and, again, speed; Page 3 the water temp, battery charge and, you guessed it, the speed again. It is all legible, even in bright sunlight.

Out on the highway, the VR's promise is fulfilled. By the standards of the mid-1990s, this is a really outstanding sport bike that compares favorably in dynamic terms with anything produced in Italy by Tamburini and Bordi — just maybe not in the looks department.

The Harley's GP-style twin-spar aluminum frame delivers superb race-quality handling that is fully on par with the benchmark Ducati 916. The short, 55.5-inch wheelbase delivered by the more compact engine results in a level of agility that makes hustling the VR through a series of sweeping turns a cinch — this is a bike that just loves the twisty stuff, as evidenced by its good results at tortuous tracks like Mid-Ohio and Pikes Peak.

The well-balanced steering geometry (24-degree head angle, 3.54-inch trail) delivers stability coupled with quick steering, and the VR changes direction effortlessly at speed thanks to the compact mass of the 60-degree V-twin engine. Yet it is superstable on fast turns as well as under braking, and it handles



Miguel Duhamel on a VR1000 at its track debut at Daytona in 1994.

compact mass of the 60-degree V-twin engine. Yet it is superstable on fast turns as well as under braking, and it handles



The road (left) and race (right) versions of the VR1000 shared the half-orange/half-black Jekyll and Hyde paint scheme.



There's never been a Harley-Davidson that looked like this. Lean yet muscular, it's too bad it didn't go into series production.

bumps well thanks to a fairly low center of gravity and the well dialed-in and compliant Öhlins suspension.

Better on the road

Paradoxically, the very attributes that ultimately prevented the VR1000 from stamping its mark on U.S. Superbike competition are what make it such a standout road bike. All of the street VRs were essentially built to early-1994 AMA Superbike spec, representing the factory race team's performance baseline.

In this guise, the Harley racer was no Ducati. It didn't have the desmo V-twin's explosive engine acceleration, its appetite for revs, or its close-ratio 6-speed gearbox that enabled power to be dialed in up high in race guise.

But what it had instead was even more suited to the street: A linear power delivery from 3,000rpm upward, with a torque curve that peaked at 8,000rpm, but was practically flat all through the rev range.

The result is a bike that's punchy and tractable to ride, with a relatively wide-ratio, sweet-shifting 5-speed gearbox that

complements the VR's torquey nature. Less is indeed more in real-world road use, where a 6-speed gearbox would offer the VR1000 no real advantages. A side-by-side comparison test by one magazine showed that the VR1000 Roadster would out-drag a Honda CBR900RR both on 50mph roll-on and from a standing start. It was indeed a potent Super Hog.

So if it's such a good street bike, why didn't the VR1000 go into serial production? Until the head honchos in Milwaukee management were convinced of the VR's viability in terms of volume sales, AND they had the excess capacity to build it, America's first Superbike was destined to remain a homologation special rather than a volume production sport bike.

With Harley-Davidson's annual production breaking through the 100,000 barrier in 1995, and the wave of customer demand for its traditional models building towards its peak of 330,619 units sold in 2007, there was little point in diverting attention from the main focus of building the brand and satisfying demand in Harley-Davidson's traditional core sector.

Yet in one way the VR1000 represented Harley



Alan Cathcart tucks in behind the VR1000's fairing for some high-speed runs during testing.

Imagine seeing a VR1000
at your local gas station!

management's insurance policy for the future, to be stuck in their corporate hip pocket against the day the existing market for their traditional models might decline through bureaucratic pressure or a change in fashion — two fickle factors it's smart to protect yourself against. It was on that basis they developed the VRSCA V-Rod, using the VR1000's engine platform as a template for a liquid-cooled, overhead-cam engine, rather than putting the VR1000 into series production at an affordable price.

That's a pity, because the VR1000 is and was one fine road bike, in spite of its challenged looks and paint scheme. Imagine if Harley management had hired designer Pierre Terblanche, by then working as a freelance consultant, to come in and pretty up the VR1000.

After riding it, I reckon they might have had a hit on their hands — especially at half that astronomical list price, making it comparable to a Ducati 916 in terms of both price and performance. And who knows — with some serious ongoing investment, the VR1000's less-than-stellar race record might have ended up a better read in the history books for the Hog faithful.

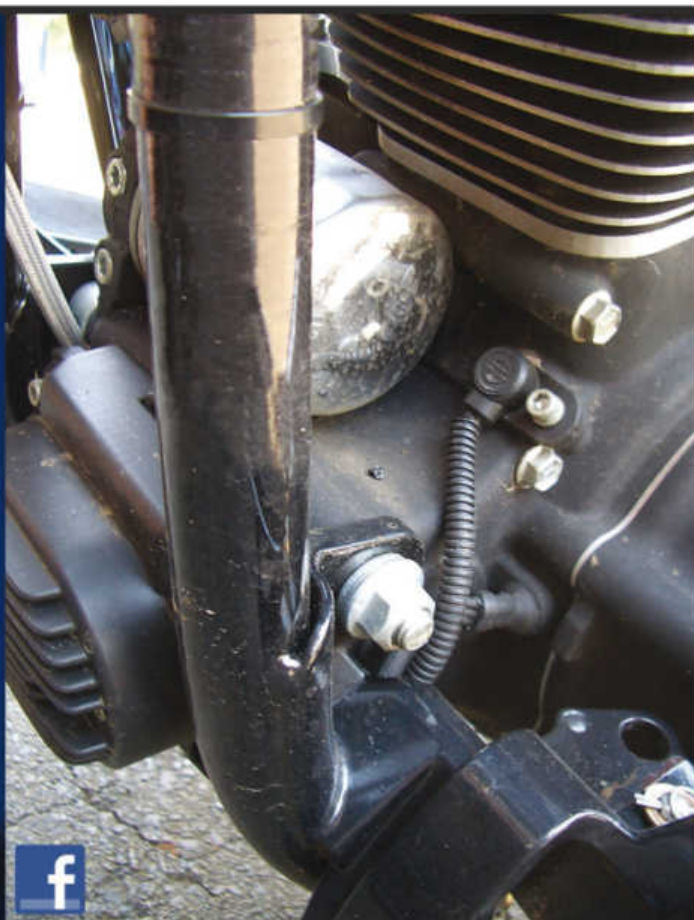
But none of that happened — and that means that the creation of America's first Superbike, the Harley-Davidson VR1000, has to count as a major missed opportunity. **MC**



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FLORIDA TO ALASKA

The summer of 1986

Story by Neale Bayly, photos by Neale Bayly and Karen McIntyre

"Where ya headed, buddy?" "Alaska," I replied. The look the garage man gave me indicated that I might as well have said the moon.

Who could blame him? Our well-used 1973 Honda CB550 had holes in the twin exhausts and was covered with bright red tape. It was hopelessly overloaded with yard-sale luggage, and my girlfriend,

Karen, and I were dressed in thrift store clothes and hand-me-down open-faced helmets, clearly not looking prepared for such a journey. He murmured "good luck" as I strapped the old hold-all to the gas

tank and kickstarted the beast into life. Clicking into gear and rolling out of the gas station, we headed for the highway, destined for 10,000 miles of fun and adventure.

The Honda, which cost us \$475 in Cape Canaveral, Florida, had no front brake, so our first ride was a bit hair-raising as we went looking for parts. A second-hand caliper and a tune-up produced a very smooth-running bike, even with the signs of neglect it had clearly experienced while accumulating the 28,000 miles on its odometer. We spent \$10 on bungee cords, bought a box of plastic bags and a couple of cheap rain suits, sprayed our tent with waterproof spray, said goodbye to Karen's family, and hit the road.

The South

Riding off with America stretched out in front of us, we were in high spirits as the flat, low scrublands of central Florida gave way to the swamps and bayous of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. We made New Orleans in an easy three days of back road meandering, and right in the middle of the city the ignition switch failed. An old cab driver hot-wired it in minutes, and we found a new one at the local Honda dealership. New Orleans was weird and wonderful, and we saw as much of it on foot as possible before the call of the road drew us back into the saddle.

Following the Mississippi River north to Memphis, Tennessee, we turned west toward Arkansas and the beautiful Ozark Mountains, but not before an amusing incident with some local swamp rat dancing naked in the headlights of his car outside our camp one night, leaving us wondering whether to fear for our lives or die laughing. Fortunately, the sound of laughter put him off and we were left alone. For safety's sake, we packed up and rode until dawn, stopping at a small diner for some much-needed breakfast and coffee.

We spent a couple of days in Arkansas, exploring the twisting mountain roads and small backwater towns in the soft



One thoroughly overloaded Honda CB550 and one very jubilant Mr. Bayly.

"Elsie" in all her glory, somewhere on the road to Alaska. A somewhat tired, 28,000-mile bike when found, the 1973 Honda CB550 made the trip with relative ease, even riding two-up.

rolling mountains before exiting out onto the prairies of Kansas. We had decided to make this journey across America on quiet back roads, away from the fast-moving freeways, and as we encountered small curiosity shops, slow-moving cars, and people who were ready to wave and smile, we knew we had made the right decision.

Into the mountains

The little Honda was running like a watch, and after two more days we were flying through Colorado and the one-horse towns of Kit Karson, Hugo, and Limon, constantly chased by nasty, black storms. Taking refuge in Hugo from the rains we met Parker Newbanks, the town's mayor and owner of three Triumph Hurricanes, a Jubilee Bonneville and other British classics. He also owned and operated the local liquor store. With an invite to ride the Jubilee, stay at their home and help them erode some of the profits from their store we stayed on, visiting with local farmers and business owners, who were fascinated by our journey across America.

A small problem arose with "Elsie," as she was now named, when an exhaust stud broke on one of the middle cylinders. Some farm knowledge from a local mechanic had the problem solved with a bolt and piece of metal wedged between it and the frame tube, essentially forcing the clamp back onto the head pipe. It wasn't pretty, but it was quick and cheap, and soon Hugo was growing small in our mirrors as we made for Longmont, Colorado.

We spent a month in Longmont working to restore our travel funds and giving the old Honda some much-needed servicing. We installed a new chain and sprockets, a back tire, new points and plugs, and after an oil change and filters we rolled west to the Rocky Mountains and the Continental Divide, the Honda purring beneath us.

Climbing over two miles into



the sky proved too much for the desperately overloaded Honda, as we lost more and more power during our ascent. A quick stop to pull out the air filter gave us back some horsepower to keep pace with traffic, and we marveled at the snow piled up beside the road, even in early summer up above the tree line.

The views that greeted us in Rocky Mountain National Park were simply

breathtaking, and being from the U.K. something I had never experienced before. A Florida girl, neither had Karen and we spent miles poking, pinching and yelling to each other at each new majestic vista that greeted us.

The diversity of America was simply hard for me to fathom at first, and my bewilderment continued as a hard day's ride saw us saying goodbye to the majestic snow-capped peaks and sailing through the vast, hot deserts of Utah. Back close to sea level, it was as if we had added a turbo, and we were soon powering north as the desert abruptly ended outside Jackson, Wyoming.

We rode up through Grand Teton National Park, its cathedral-spire mountains dominating the skyline as spring gave way to summer and the meadows came alive with multi-colored wildflowers. Then it was on to Yellowstone, where the mountains, geysers, fast-flowing rivers and abundance of wildlife took this British lad, who had never seen more than a badger in the wild, to new heights. Taking advantage of the many primitive camping sites, we hiked, took pictures, and sat around campfires with American families before packing up and heading north.

Canada calls

From Yellowstone we rode through the foreboding mountains of Montana, pump jacks relentlessly pumping oil as we passed, and by nightfall into



Karen and Elsie in New Orleans.



Top to bottom: The Melrose, Kansas, Trading Post (it's still there today); the Parker Newbanks family with their Triumphs in Hugo, Colorado; Neale Bayly, somewhere in Colorado. Gotta love that Eighties hair.



Canada and grain country. By now the sun was setting much later, and it provided quite the picture across the prairies as it set behind the silhouettes of the massive grain barns that dotted the landscape, telling us it was time to make camp for the night. Most evenings we would free camp wherever we could find a place, and those nights out in the wild open spaces of Canada, a plate of steaming hot food and a cup of tea fresh from our small camp stove in our bellies, made us feel as connected to this universe as any person on earth can be.

Another long day of riding saw us just outside Calgary, Alberta, a refreshingly clean and vibrant city, at the BMW dealership of a fascinating gentleman by the name of Roger Reuben. Instantly excited by a pair of wayward adventurers on an old motorcycle, he dragged us into his workshop and found a couple of good used tires for the Honda. One went on the front and the other got strapped to the back for a spare. Next, he dug out a pair of shock absorbers from a Honda CB1100F. Although they were a little long, he knew we would need some suspension for the Alaska Highway. They would make all the difference on the rough roads ahead. Amazed again at people's enthusiasm and interest in our adventure, we set off for the last and most difficult leg of the journey. At least people no longer looked at us in disbelief when we told them we were headed for Alaska; they just offered us good luck.

From Calgary, we roared north into the Canadian Rockies and up through Banff and the incredible national park. Setting up camp early one evening at the Columbia Icefield, we enjoyed a cold but fascinating evening listening to the wild sounds of the slow-moving ice off in the distance. We didn't sleep much that night, so rising early we layered up and hit the road. With some of the most breathtaking vistas of the journey, it was difficult not to get a neck ache, twisting and turning in the saddle trying to take it all in: A herd of deer fording a wide, slow-moving river to our left, a brown bear in the woods to our right, and the Honda rolling along strong in the crisp, morning air. Could a couple of young people on their way to Alaska ask for more?

At a stop with some friends in Prince



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Top to bottom: Riding through the incredible scenery of Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada; now the hard part starts — welcome sign for the Alaska Highway; heading north, still on pavement, with worse to come.

George, we were given a pair of good, used, full-face helmets and loaded down with a few thousand extra calories to ward off the cold, ready to tackle the famed and fabled Alaska Highway. Would it be logs lashed together with old Klondike gold miners lining the side of the road? Would we meet bears, bandits — or Winnebagos? Who knew or cared on that beautiful sunny morning, the little Honda still purring beneath us.

Alaska

There was no brass band giving us a fanfare as we headed off into heavily falling rain, and soon the slippery tarmac turned to mud and gravel as low clouds obscured everything but the broken road ahead. At 9:30 in the evening, cold, wet and tired at the end of a 500-mile day, we broke down and took our third and last hotel room of the entire journey to thaw our bodies and dry out our clothes.


The heavy rain and dense, low-hanging clouds obscured much of the incredible scenery the Alaska Highway is famous for, and we would have to wait until our return to enjoy it. For five days we shook, rattled, and rolled, pounded by the rough road and pelted by the incessant rain. We dodged large puddles, played chicken with swerving semitrucks and came to loathe lumbering campers when we would have to jump the gravel pile in the middle of the road to pass. And then, on July 5, as the midnight sun was extending our riding days late into the night, we crossed into Alaska with an elation that's hard to describe. Literally jumping for joy, we enjoyed a brief celebration before saddling up to continue with the business at hand: making it to Fairbanks. Our funds were depleting fast, and we needed work if our travels were to continue.

The land of the midnight sun it truly is, with broad daylight even at midnight, and it was hard to adjust to the permanent daylight, which induced a fun, childlike hyperactivity. We stayed in Fairbanks for two months, campaigning the old Honda up to 90 miles a day, seven days a week as we worked to make more travel coupons. Living and working at the world-famous Malamute Saloon, we met the wildest people from all walks of life and all corners of the world.


With summer turning to fall and the



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Camper vehicles were a regular threat, throwing up dirt and going slow, forcing passes over gravel piles in the middle of the road.

sun sinking lower each day, the tourist buses stopped coming to town, and we knew we would soon have to leave. Our occasional evening trips to the firebreaks in the neighboring forests to listen to the huskies howl now brought the most incredible experience we had managed to jam into the last few months — the Aurora Borealis. Lying beneath the trees, with the sky erupting into a multicolored kaleidoscope of movement and wonder to the accompanying sound track of what we felt must really be wolves, those moments were embedded permanently into our memory banks.

But the nights quickly became colder, and with winter fast approaching we made a decision to sell the Honda to a local BMW rider for \$400. The speed-

ometer had stopped somewhere on the Dalton Highway, a little over 38,000 miles registering on the faded odometer. We had ridden from the subtropical climes of Florida to within 50 miles of the Arctic Circle, and it was a sad moment trading our beloved Elsie for a pocketful of bills.

Soon, the place we had called home for the last few months would be cloaked in darkness and covered in snow, so we slipped on our backpacks, put out our thumbs, and started heading south to California to find some sunshine and plan for our next motorcycle adventure. **MC**



The return: Alaska ride 2014

While the ride on the old Honda has always been a highlight of my travel life, I was never at peace about not reaching the Arctic Circle. Back in 1986, the roads to get there were nothing more than rocks, dirt and gravel. I remember the moment we decided to return to Fairbanks as clear as day. We just couldn't take the pounding any longer, and with little money and jobs that required the motorcycle for transportation, it was a self-preserving move. We had no idea how much farther it was, or what would happen if we broke down.

Twenty-eight years later, I rolled out of Calgary on a new Triumph Explorer with my 13-year-old son, Patrick, riding pillion, and my good friend Ray McKenzie to put it right. We had just under two weeks to ride up the Alaska Highway, through Fairbanks, up the Dalton Highway and on to the circle and back. Could we do it?

It was a long, tough ride, even on modern motorcycles, and we wouldn't have made it without Patrick's patience and ability to sit on the Triumph for long periods of time. We experienced every extreme of weather, and some of the most beautiful, pristine wilderness North America has to offer. My memories were very faded, like old snapshots in a photo album, and I was, as Del Amitri sang in one of their songs, "surprised by the lack of memories that I thought would flow through me." But it didn't diminish the journey in any way, as Patrick and I shared a new adventure and created memories we'll enjoy for years to come.

The day we reached the Arctic Circle was different than I'd imagined. In 2014 the landscape was much greener, the

road a lot smoother, but suddenly we came across an outcrop of rocks that looked familiar. We pulled over for some photos, and as I watched Ray take some pictures of Patrick sitting on a rock, the vast expanse of wilderness rolling away behind him to the place I'd dreamed about for nearly three decades, I had my moment of intense joy. We had made it. I was accompanied by my son and one of the best friends I've had in my life on one of the most incredible rides I've ever taken. We officially committed the achievement to pixels at the Arctic Circle sign some miles up the road, but standing there in that moment I realized that after 28 years, this time I was going to make it. — Neale Bayly



The Arctic Circle at last: Neale and son Patrick (foreground) in 2014.

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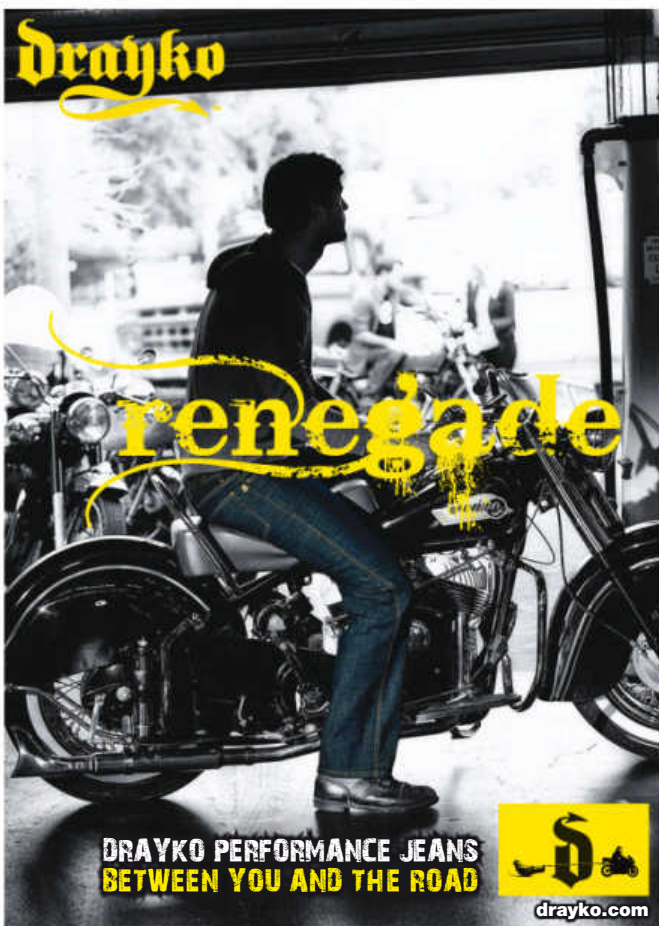
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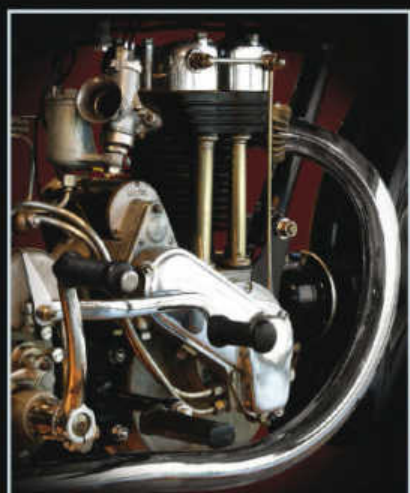
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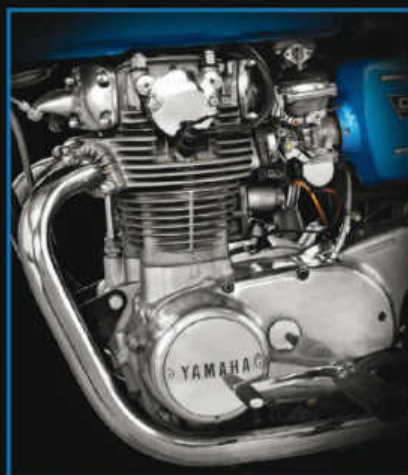
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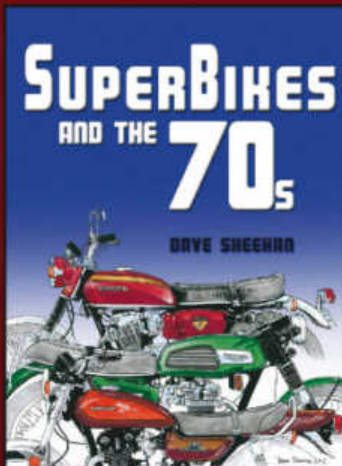


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Rust, anyone? The original seat pan on our CB350.

PROJECT HONDA CB350

Part IV

Story and photos by Richard Backus

Last issue, we told you about a broken mounting lug on the lower left of our 1970 Honda CB350's engine. That broken lug was something of a mystery, as there wasn't any indication how it might have happened. Thanks to a reader with experience in the matter, we're pretty sure we now know what caused the break.

Former Honda CB350 owner Bob Sheehan wrote in to tell of us of his identical experience with his 1972 CB350, on which he'd mounted a set of crash bars. Bob told us that the left side crash bar mounted to the frame up top and the lower left engine mounting lug at the bottom. Following a left side crash,

he discovered his engine mount was broken, even though at first it didn't appear his bike had suffered any damage. "It looked exactly like the photograph of yours," Bob wrote.

Looking through the pile of parts that came with our Honda (which, you might recall, was partially disassembled when we bought it), we found a set of crash bars, with evidence of road rash on the left crash bar. Mystery solved. Clearly, our Honda suffered the exact same fate as Bob's. Who knows what kind of damage the Honda would have received in the absence of the crash bars in whatever fall it suffered, but it's somehow ironic to think they played a role in its damage.

Moving forward

We were feeling pretty good about our progress up to last issue, but then I got laid out with a torn Achilles tendon. That slowed things down more than a little, and we're still in a bit of a struggle to catch up thanks to the onset of winter and the craziness of the winter holiday. It was something of a perfect storm, and all of those elements kept us out of the garage more than we'd expected, but we did make some important



Our used seat pan as delivered (top) and ready for foam (above). We had to weld some tears in the metal (top and middle right), but it came out just fine (right).

progress in some key areas.

A surprising issue — at least to us — was the difficulty in finding a new seat, something I touched on last issue. As the lead photo in this installment shows, our original seat was shot. We knew the cover and foam were shot, but apart from that it appeared reasonably sound on first look. Unfortunately, stripping it down revealed a mess, the seat pan terminally rusted and beyond repair. Well, beyond our capacity to repair, anyway. Someone more skilled could likely reconstruct the pan, either welding in new metal as needed or by using the pan as a form to make a replica out of fiberglass. I've seen plenty of people do both, but lacking those skills we were left to trolling the Internet and old bike junkyards in what was looking like a hopeless search for a reasonably priced replacement in good condition.

Hardcore CB350 fans will know that 1968-1970 CB350 seats hinge at the rear. Starting in 1971, Honda went to a more conventional side hinge. The early bikes weren't made in near the numbers as the later 1971-1974 models, making certain parts — like seats — hard to find. We did find a close to perfect replacement, but at more than \$400 it exceeded both our budget and our basic approach to this bike,

which is a budget-minded classic. And given our desire to have this bike look mostly stock, we wanted to avoid going with a non-stock, aftermarket-type seat.

Fortunately for us, Honda specialist Don Stockett of Vintage Motorcycle Rescue took note of our predicament when we mentioned it in the last issue. Don contacted us about a used seat he had, and as an added bonus he also had a used headlight bucket to replace the broken one on our CB350. As it turns out, those are getting hard to find, as well. Don warned us that the used seat he had wasn't perfect and would need work, but from my description he knew it was better than what we had. Actually, it was way better than what we had, and if we were just keeping an old rider on the road it could have been used straightaway. As Don warned us, it did have a few warts, chief among them two stress tears in the steel pan (one on either side), right in the middle, plus some minor rust along the lower edges and on the top of the pan.

To prepare it, we first stripped the pan using a soda blaster and then took it over to friend of the magazine Pat Slimmer, who quickly fixed the tears in the metal, welding them up and grinding them down smooth. With that done, we gave the pan a "final" prep before giving



The frame is just starting to go together.



Front brake plate and wheel hub (left) before cleaning and polishing and with rear hub and rims after polishing. Much nicer.

it a few coats of appliance-grade black epoxy paint. I say “final” because we didn’t knock ourselves out making the pan perfect. As the pictures show, the pan still shows plenty of defects from the rust that had attacked it. But that’s OK, because our goal was simply to remove any visible rust, followed by a thorough cleaning and prep so the paint would stick. With new foam and a new seat cover installed, it’ll look good as new.

Next step

We made a few other points of progress, as well. The hubs are polished — finally — and on their way to the folks at Buchanan’s Spoke & Rim, where they’ll get laced up with new chrome spokes, and we’ve made a bit more progress on cleaning the engine. Once we’d proved the engine runs, with good compression and no odd noises, we hoped we’d be able to clean it without any real tear down. Basically, we’re trying to be lazy, but we finally gave in and decided to strip it down as needed, as it’s proven surprisingly difficult to clean.

The funny thing is, it doesn’t look any worse than the engine on the 1973 Honda CB500 we café’d way back in 2009, but it sure doesn’t want to clean up as easily as that engine did. Go figure. Time will tell how far we’ll have to go pulling it apart, but just to be prepared we picked up a full gasket



It doesn’t look that bad, but our CB350 engine has resisted our best attempts to really clean it.

set from Honda engine specialist Bore Tech (bore-tech.com), along with an oil filter and clutch hub spanner tool, which will come in handy when we install the new clutch plates we got from Barnett.

We’ve also started fitting the frame back together, so far mostly just to help us confirm what little bits we may be missing so we can get them sourced. We’ve torn down the

front forks, and while we knew we’d need new fork tubes, we were happy to discover the sliders themselves are just fine. That wasn’t exactly a surprise given the bike’s apparently low miles, but it’s one of those things you just don’t know till you get there. The original drum brakes are fine, with plenty of material left on the brake shoes, so there’s nothing to do there but a thorough cleanup. New sprockets are on their way from Rebel Gears (rebelgears.com) and we’ll need a new chain, but once the wheels come back from Buchanan’s we’ll actually get to start putting our Honda back together.

That’s going to be pretty exciting, but it underscores how much work we still have in front of us. With any luck, by next issue we’ll have something approaching a rolling chassis, with the bodywork sent off to Marbles Motors (marblesmotors.com) for prep and painting. **MC**

Project Honda CB350 suppliers

Barnett Clutches & Cables: New clutch, brake, speedometer, tachometer and throttle cables, new clutch discs and springs — barnettclutches.com

Bore Tech: Full gasket set, oil filter/clutch spanner tool — bore-tech.com

Buchanan’s Spoke & Rim: Relace wheels with new chrome spokes — buchananspokes.com

Charlie’s Place: Electronic ignition, ignition coils and mounts, voltage regulator/rectifier — charlies-place.com

Custom Coatings & Metal: Media blasting and powder coating — facebook.com/customcoatingsmetal

Dime City Cycles: Tapered steering head bearing kit, miscellaneous hardware — dimecitycycles.com

Forking by Frank: New fork tubes — frankmain.com

Hagon Shocks USA: Classic I chrome shocks — hagonshocksusa.com

Marbles Motors: Paint prep and painting — marblesmotors.com

Rebel Gears Motorcycle Sprockets USA: Front and rear drive sprockets — rebelgears.com

Sirius Consolidated: Master carb rebuild kit, seat foam, seat cover, seat strap and buckles — siriusconinc.com

The Pit Stop: Aluminum engine welding — (785) 887-6626

Vintage Motorcycle Rescue: Used seat and headlight bucket, battery cover, magnetic switch cover — vintagemotorcyclesrescue.com

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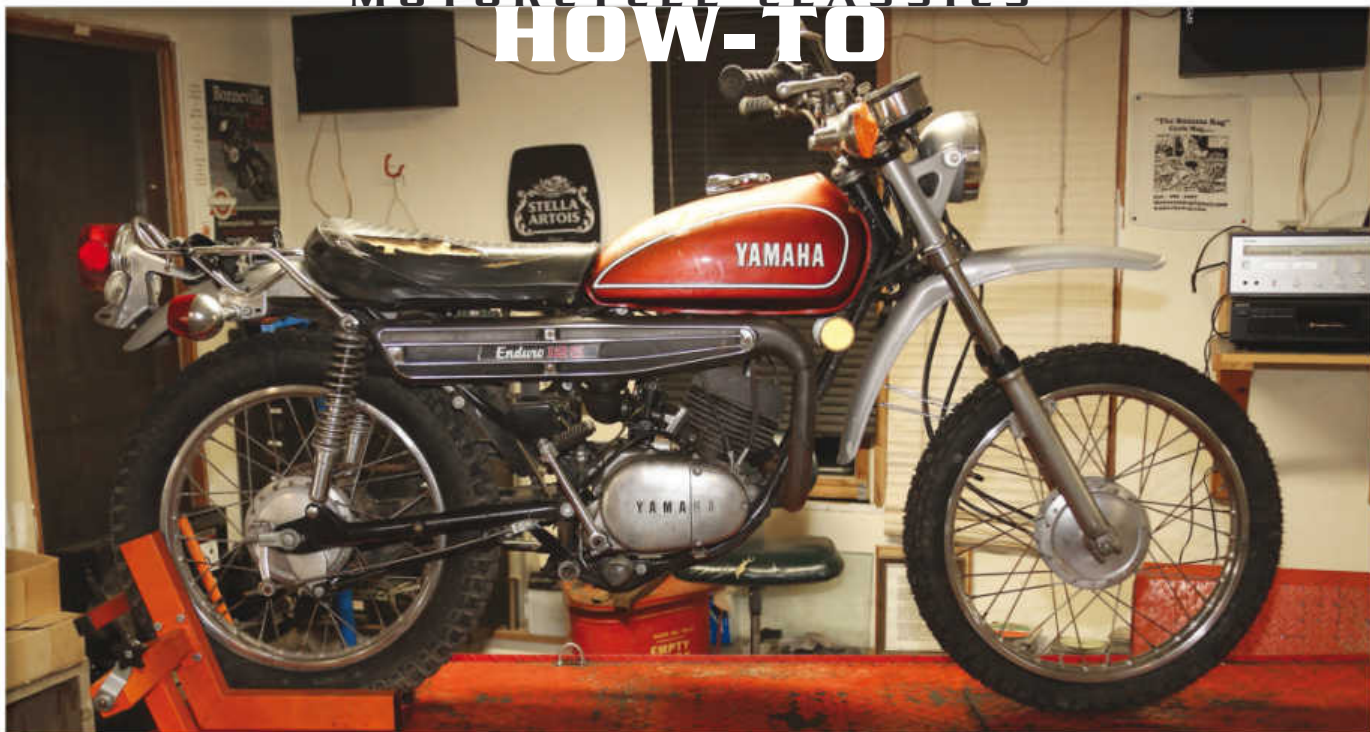
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Change a motorcycle tire

Changing tires isn't a particularly fun or rewarding job, but like many chores, it's a good one to know how to do when the occasion arises. Frankly, this issue's *How-To* reminded us of how rusty we are at the job, rarely changing our own tires because A) it's usually rolled into the cost of a new tire and B) you still need to get the wheel and tire balanced once you're done, also usually rolled into the cost of a new tire.

If you want to change your own tires, there are a few tools we suggest having on hand. You won't use them all at one time, but they're worth having and they're relatively inexpensive, to boot. Our lineup consists of a valve core tool for removing and installing valve cores (\$4.95), a valve repair tool for cleaning threads on damaged valve stems (\$5.95), a puller for fishing the valve stem on a tube through the rim hole (\$11.95), a valve stem mounting tool for tubeless rims (\$17.95), a set of tire irons (\$25.95 each for heavy duty irons — extra leverage and strength is always nice — or \$13.95 each for standard 11-inch irons — great for smaller tires and they'll fit in a tank bag), and a set of rim protectors (\$7.95 for the pair and especially appreciated with aluminum or cast rims). We picked up everything you see here from BikeMaster (bikemaster.com), including the new tube (\$12.95).

The biggest challenge can be getting an old tire off. Tires get stiffer with age, and tire beads have a tendency to weld themselves to the rim over time, making it hard to break the bead and pull the

tire over the rim. It's not unusual to have to cut off stuck and stiff decades-old tires to avoid damaging the wheel rim.

The front tire on our 1974 Yamaha DT125 Enduro didn't put up much of a fight. With the valve core removed and the tire deflated, the bead broke with simple downward hand pressure. When that doesn't work, push a tire iron between the bead and rim in one spot, then pry the iron down to push the bead down and off the rim, working around until it falls loose. Rim protectors are great if you're worried about marring your rim. We used them for the dismount, but we didn't bother with them during remount as our new tire went on easily. If there's a colored balance dot on your new tire, line it up with the valve stem hole. And finally, give the bead a light coating of soapy water or tire mounting paste to help the new tire slip over the rim.



1 Tools of the trade: You won't need them all at once, but it's nice to have a good selection of tire tools ready at hand. The tool below the inner tube is for installing valves in tubeless rims.



2 The first step is breaking the bead. With smaller tires you can usually do this by hand, pushing down on the deflated tire's sidewall until it lets loose from the rim. If it won't, break it loose with a tire iron placed between the rim and the bead, prying down on the iron.

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3 If you use rim protectors, put them on the rim first. Next, slip the tire irons behind the tire bead, then pry back and pull the bead up over the rim. Pry the bead up with one iron, then hold the iron down, following with the second to pull the bead up over the rim.



4 Old tires can be a bear to stretch over the rim, but ours pulled over fairly easily. Once started, reposition the rim protectors as needed and work around the rim until the tire is free.



5 With one side off you can often push the other bead over the rim without using the tire irons. With the bead in the rim recess and the tire at its loosest, push it off as shown. It will usually roll off.



6 With the tire off, remove the rim strip (ours had completely deteriorated) and clean the inside of the rim. Our steel rim had a quite a bit of rust. If this was a daily rider we'd consider replacing it, but since this bike only sees occasional field use we felt comfortable just cleaning off the loose scale.



7 Although we didn't bother, you can coat the inside of the rim with a rust treatment or use rust-resistant paint to help stave off future rust. Once the rim is cleaned stretch a new rim strip into place, making sure to center the hole for the valve stem.



8 Lubricate the bead, position the new tire and push the inner bead over the rim in one spot. Work around the rim evenly left to right, pushing the bead down by hand. Use a tire iron to stretch the last bit of the tire over the wheel rim.



9 With one bead over the rim, put the tube inside the tire, with the valve centered on the valve hole in the rim. Feed the tire valve through the rim and secure it loosely with its retaining nut. Make sure the tube is inside the tire and rim so it won't get pinched when the bead is pushed down in the next step.



10 Starting at the valve, push the bead down into place by hand. Work around the tire evenly left to right, pushing down and finishing with a tire iron to stretch the last bit over the rim.



11 Tighten the valve stem retaining nut and install the valve core. Air up the tire, then remove the core and deflate it. Check that the bead is evenly seated on both sides. Reinstall the core, air the tire up to the appropriate pressure and install the valve cap.

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"If your bike has a fiberglass tank, you should stay away from gasohol."

Ignition or carburetion

Q: I recently finished rebuilding my 1978 Triumph T140E. I installed a Boyer Bransden Mark III ignition and set the static timing. I installed the crankshaft plunger tool to confirm that the rotor mark on the alternator is at 38 degrees before top dead center (BTDC). On my rotor, which is keyed to the shaft, there are two marks 180 degrees opposite each other. I first found the TDC mark on the flywheel, then, with the bike in high gear, backed the wheel up with my finger on the plunger until it clicked into the 38 degrees BTDC hole (full advance). This made the pointer on the primary drive cover line exactly up with one of the marks on the rotor, which I marked with white paint. I felt confident this was 38 degrees BTDC. I then lined up the magnetic retractor on the camshaft taper with the hole in the Boyer plate for clockwise timing and tightened it. It seems to have seated and be tight on the camshaft taper.

I can start the bike, though it seems to take an extraordinary amount of effort; many kicks, an occasional kickback or a backfire through the carburetor. Once started, it seems to skip at times at idle, and when ridden seems to lack pep, though it sounds OK. When I applied a timing gun to it, I had to move the plate far counterclockwise (I am not sure if this means I am advancing or retarding the spark) to get it to line up at high rpms. Then, when I shut the bike off and tried to start it again, I got a wicked stronger kickback through the kickstarter and more backfiring through the carb. I put it back to the original (static timing) setup, and got the same result I mentioned first. Once the engine is warm, it starts up much easier, often in just a kick or two.

What could make it so the stroboscopically set timing yields results are so different from the static timing and cause so much trouble when starting? This bike is a late 1978 T140E with new Amal MK I premier carbs replacing the old Mk IIs, set with 106/200 jets. The battery, wiring harness, coils (two 6-volt in series), plugs and plug wires are all new. Thanks for your advice.

Aram N./Denver, Colorado

A: Let me see if I can help with your timing issues. First off, moving the plate counter-clockwise when the rotor moves clockwise means you are advancing the spark. Too much of that will definitely lead to kickback when starting. Make sure you have the correct color



Ready to take your classic queries: Old-bike mechanic Keith Fellenstein.

coded leads from the timing plate connected to the black box; reversing them will lead to timing problems. Make sure your battery is fully charged; a failing battery can lead to timing problems. If at all possible, power the timing light from a separate battery source. That will eliminate ignition noise in the circuit as a source of bad readings. If the timing plug and the alternator rotor line up, I'd say your static timing is set correctly.

You mention that the bike starts much easier when warm. This leads me to believe your problem may be more carburetor than ignition. The skip at idle and lack of pep also indicates that. Backfiring through the carburetor when starting is usually caused by a lean condition. Make sure the idle circuit is clean; new Premiers have been known to have clogged idle passages. New Premiers also come with stay-up floats: Make sure your float levels are correct. Does a simple press on the tickler allow you to flood the carbs to start a cold engine or do you have to press them repeatedly to make it work? A possible complication is the recent rebuild; are you sure the cam timing isn't off? I hope this helps. Let us know how things work.

Ethanol troubles

Q: As it's very difficult to find ethanol-free gasoline these days, I'm curious as to your thoughts on the long-term effects of that concoction on daily riders? My last experience was with my not exactly vintage 1994 BMW R1100RS.

Through 65,000 miles the effects of the less-than-ideal fuel was noticeable, with ventures into the tank to change out fuel filters and rubber hoses. We hear of additives to calm the effects, including Stabil and the like, but nothing is very confidence-inspiring. This bike was injected, so the injectors were a concern, along with every gasket and plastic part contacting the fuel. Then there is the "coat-the-tank" exercise that is commonly temporary and necessarily repeatable for steel-tanked bikes. So while I'd love to go back to the Honda CB500 four of my earlier days, I have my doubts.

Terry Meyers/via email

A: While it's certain that ethanol in gasoline damages fiberglass tanks, the effects on the rest of the fuel system are more subtle. If your bike has a fiberglass tank, you should stay away from gasohol, as the ethanol dissolves fiberglass. Ask anyone with a vintage Bultaco and you're sure to get an earful. It is becoming more difficult to get ethanol-free gasoline. Websites such as pure-gas.org show where you can buy ethanol-free gas in the U.S. A more expensive option is aviation gas, assuming the local airport will sell it to you. It may be technically illegal, as I don't think avgas has highway taxes added to the price. The problem there is that you can't travel and be certain of a good supply. That brings up my modus operandi, which is that any gas being burned *right now* is good enough. It's when you let it sit in the tank for any length of time that problems stack up. You should make sure the fuel lines and any rubber parts in the carburetors or fuel system are alcohol resistant. For storage, I usually try to not leave a partially full tank of any fuel; the extra air space above the fuel invites condensation and rust. An ethanol treatment additive can help with the long-term effects of storage, too.

Fouling spark plug

Q: My motorbike is a Bajaj Caliber. The spark plug on it is a light brown on long trips, but if I check the plug after a short journey or when it's just been idling for a bit, the plug tip is black. Why is this and how can I overcome this problem?

Ricardo P./via email

"I started with just a frame and cases; 'reassemble as removed' will not apply."

A: If your plug is black and sooty at idle or low throttle settings, I'd try leaning out the idle mixture by 1/4 to 1/2 a turn. You may have to increase the idle speed if you do that, and you may find it stumbling a bit as you open the throttle. Oftentimes, I'll adjust the idle a little rich so that acceleration is smoother as you open the throttle. If the plug is just black and not fouling, that may be the best compromise. (Note: A follow-up email from Ricardo says this worked.)

Triumph/Lucas ET ignition

Q: While most people have given up on the energy transfer (ET) system, those of us doing a restoration for AMCA judging must live with it, as the bike must be started and the system must be within specs. As I started with just a frame and cases, the statement to "reassemble as removed" will not apply. I believe the rotor location pin on the engine sprocket is the key to its placement and as I was advised to put it at TDC with the pin at 8 o'clock. I have done so, but I still question why. The factory service books do not advise

this, as best I can tell. Tom Gunn's notes from TRI-COR service school do not address it either. Can you advise me further?

Dave Goldman/via email

A: The energy transfer ignition is an odd duck. It basically fires the coils on the upstroke, for lack of a better term, where a standard battery/coil system fires on the downstroke, so to speak.

I'll begin by explaining how a battery/coil system works, then explain how the ET system works. The battery/coil system charges the primary circuit of the coil from the alternator and then holds the primary voltage until the points open (dwell time). Once the points open, the magnetic field produced by the primary coil collapses and induces voltage in the secondary coil. This higher voltage is what jumps the spark gap in the engine and ignites the fuel/air mixture. This system has a rectifier to change the sine wave AC alternator output to DC and a battery to level out the voltage.

The ET system keeps the primary side grounded until the points open, and then the voltage flows through the primary coil, exciting the secondary coil to produce a spark. This system has no rectifier to change AC to DC and no battery to level out the voltage, so to produce the best spark, you must time the voltage output of the alternator (sine wave) to be highest when the points open. Those old ET alternators have two sets of coils, one for lighting (ha!) and one for ignition. The rotor is placed as it is in relation to TDC so that the sine wave output will be highest when the points are to be opened. This is also why the advance unit is restricted on an ET bike compared to a battery/coil bike. Outside of the peak alternator voltage, there isn't enough energy output to fire the coils. **MC**

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Electric: AHRMA racer Arthur Kowitz

At first blush a vintage Norton Manx and a Brammo Empulse electric seem like odd track mates, yet they're both American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association eligible. How that came to be is mostly the work of one person, Arthur Kowitz.

In 1975, Kowitz got his AMA expert license and started riding a new 903cc Kawasaki Z1B in Superbike Production. He took first at Pocono that year, and ninth at Daytona in 1976 in the then-new AMA Superbike Championship. But at the end of 1982, the AMA decided to limit 4-cylinder Superbikes to 750cc. "I was already racing against 4-valve Suzukis and Hondas," Kowitz says, "and I'm thinking, I'm going to have to retool. I'm doing my own engines and chassis, my own R&D, I'm 33 years old and I've got new children. It was the intersection of too many things." Kowitz didn't stop riding, however. "I never got away from motorcycles, I just didn't go to the racetrack anymore."

The fascination with electric power goes back to the same era. "Sometime back in the 1970s, I'm reading *Mother Earth News* and there's an article about a guy who converted an Opel GT to electric. I was so excited. An electric car — no gas, no exhaust." Kowitz bought the plans but didn't build the car, yet some years later he and his son Abe rescued a Mazda GLC from the crusher and converted it to electric, following that up with a Saturn, also converted. Kowitz wanted to build an electric motorcycle, but the technology just wasn't there — yet. "I didn't think I had the time and resources to build what I wanted, so I bided my time and waited," Kowitz says.

In 2007 Kowitz joined AHRMA, racing the same Z1B from his Superbike days. He won the AHRMA Superbike championship in 2008, repeating the effort in 2014. Meanwhile, his interest in electric motorcycles continued, and when Brammo introduced the Empulse in 2012, Kowitz was already on the waiting list. "I took it for a track day and it was so much fun that I

started to strip it, and I thought, if I strip this thing, I'm gonna lose the street bike I enjoy, so I bought a second one."

In 2013, Kowitz applied for his FIM pro license to ride in the eRoadRacing World Cup, but was declined because he was too old. "I was 62 and the limit was 50," he says. A lifelong AMA member, he got the AMA to file for a waiver, and following a series of tests ("I felt like I was going to be an astronaut," Kowitz says of the experience), he got his license and ran in the Laguna Seca and Indianapolis races.

When FIM announced it was dropping the series after 2013, Kowitz decided to try to pick up the pieces, but it wasn't easy. "No one was interested," he says. "A lot of groups wouldn't allow electric bikes on the track much less have a class for them." Except AHRMA. "AHRMA allowed it as an exhibition race," he says, and the first eMotoRacing races ran in 2014. Two years later, AHRMA made eSuperSport the official race class. "We started with a couple of entries, then four, then six, then eight, and now it's a permanent class."

Modern bikes racing in AHRMA may seem left field to some, but not to Kowitz. "AHRMA is historic, not vintage," he stresses. "The minute we stepped on the moon, it was historic. In that perspective, racing electric motorcycles is more historic than some other established modern classes." **MC**

"A lot of groups wouldn't allow electric bikes on the track."

Rider: Arthur Kowitz
Age/years riding: 66/53
Occupation: Commercial real estate broker and property manager
Race bikes: 1975 Kawasaki Z1B/
2013 Brammo Empulse TTX
Daily riders: 2006 MV Agusta
F4 1000, 2007 Aprilia Tuono,
2009 Kawasaki Concours, 2013
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- Gringo full face helmet in limited edition tracker vintage white/black or limited edition scallop red/white. The Gringo features seamless injection-molded ABS outer shell, shock-absorbing EPS inner shell and a removable hand-stitched comfort liner with open-cell foam and brushed Lycra construction.
- Gringo S full face helmet in limited edition spectrum black/orange or limited edition checker metallic silver. The Gringo S model is built around Biltwell's injection-molded ABS outer shell and features a shock-absorbing EPS liner with hand-stitched interior padding, cheek pads and BioFoam chin bar cushion for comfort.

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RIDES AND DESTINATIONS



PALACE OF DREAMS: SALMON ARM, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Southern British Columbia is all about mountains and lakes, from the Coast Range to the Rockies. So it's not surprising that it also has some of the best riding roads on the planet.

For example, on BC Highway 97 from the resort town of Sicamous on Shuswap Lake to Armstrong in the Okanagan Valley, you'll find a breathless succession of fast sweeping turns as the highway swings along the lakeshore. From sleepy Armstrong, Salmon River Road dipsy-doodles around rolling wheat fields back to the Trans-Canada Highway in Salmon Arm. And if you continue 15 miles westbound on the Trans-Canada Highway, just before the lakeside hamlet of Sorrento is a smart new industrial building bearing the name Dreamcycle.

The middle of B.C.'s Shuswap Lake resort region is an unlikely place to find a motorcycle museum, but it's here that you'll find a new collection displaying important European, Japanese and American motorcycles from the 20th century, and owner Mark Lane has plans to make it far more significant.

About five years ago, Lane relocated to Sorrento from Alberta after selling his tree planting business. He planned to realize his lifelong vision with the proceeds. The first part of the dream — a calling, even — was to open a museum of motorcycling. "I see motorcycles as pieces of art, much like a painting," Lane says. "I can sit and enjoy looking at them for hours. Each one is beautiful and unique in its own way."

Lane has even bigger plans for the future. Currently, the Dreamcycle premises include a restoration shop where Lane turns crusty barn finds into exhibits for the museum. He will soon

open up his shop so visitors can watch motorcycle restorations in progress. And best of all, he will encourage local schools to participate, so students can get firsthand experience working with shop tools while learning the art of motorcycle restoration.

Lane's enthusiasm is contagious: He frequently tours people around the collection himself, adding his personal stories to the comprehensive printed details that accompany each exhibit. The Dreamcycle gift shop is also a treasure trove of books and memorabilia. For example, I found a rare English-language printing of Riccardo Crippa's definitive book on the history of Moto Rumi. And if looking at motorcycles makes you hungry, Sprockets Café in the same building makes delicious fresh baked goods and sandwiches — and a great cappuccino!

Dreamcycle's timing was fortuitous, too. Probably the most comprehensive collection of classic and vintage motorcycles in western Canada is at Vancouver's Deeley Harley-Davidson dealership. Former owner Trev Deeley accumulated hundreds of motorcycles from three generations of the family business going back to the 1910s. But after Trev's passing a decade ago, the company decided to mothball its collection and focus on "themed" exhibitions featuring just a couple dozen bikes at a time. The rest of the 200-plus collection spends most of its time in a warehouse behind closed doors — a sad loss.

Dreamcycle has filled a void, and its location right on the Trans-Canada Highway means there's plenty of passing traffic. A few days of motorcycling around the Okanagan-Shuswap region combined with a visit to Dreamcycle makes for a great destination. — *Robert Smith*

THE SKINNY

What: Salmon Arm, nestled on the Shuswap Lake system, is a great base for exploring the Okanagan and Shuswap regions of Southern British Columbia. The Dreamcycle museum is about 20 miles away in Sorrento, B.C.

How to Get There: From Vancouver, take BC 1, the Trans-Canada east, through the Fraser Canyon, or the Coquihalla Highway, BC 5 (faster but less interesting). From central Washington, take US 97 north to the Oroville border crossing and keep going north on BC 97 to Sicamous.

Best Kept Secret: BC 5A from Merritt to Kamloops: a blissful ribbon of twisty tarmac crossing Douglas Lake Ranch, one of the 10 largest ranches in North America. Check your fuel!

Avoid: BC 97C, the Coquihalla Connector. A concrete slab firing over the Thompson Plateau to 5,760 feet at Pennask Summit. It can snow here any time, even in July. Ask me how I know!

More Info: Dreamcycle is open Monday and Wednesday to Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and on Sunday from 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sprockets is open Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Check opening times in winter at dreamcycle.ca



First-year 1972 Suzuki GT750J at Dreamcycle.

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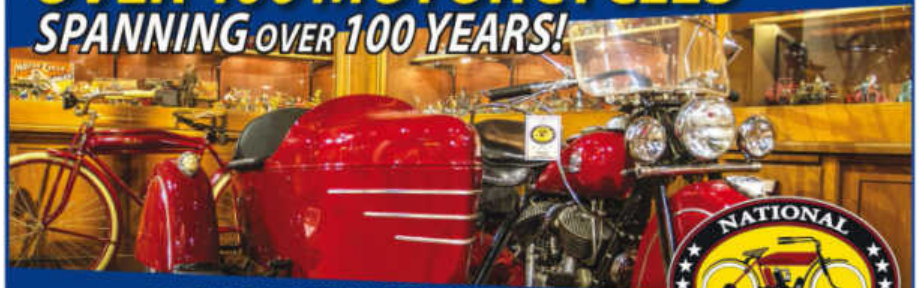
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Circle #3; see card pg 81

Don't miss these upcoming events!

3/4 This year marks the 75th Anniversary of Daytona Bike Week, which runs March 4-13. The racing kicks off on Saturday, March 5, with the Daytona Supercross, followed by Flat Track racing on the 10th and 11th on the Daytona Flat Track outside turns 1 and 2 of the super speedway. And there's more good news — for 2016, the Daytona 200 returns, featuring American SportBike Racing Association's (ASRA) 600cc sport bikes racing on Daytona's famed road course. For more info, schedules and specific locations of activities visit the Bike Week site. On the web at officialbikeweek.com

3/5 Back for its sixth year, the Modern Classics Motorcycle Show will feature the competition machines of "Motocross, Trials and Enduros." About half of the 100 show bikes come from a featured category, and this year attendees will enjoy a variety of dirt machines from the 1960s through the 1990s. More highlights include a display of the very first production Britten (SN P0001), and also the return of artist Makoto Endo, who last year entertained the crowd with a rendition of a 1931 Indian Scout. Check out the Friday Night Modern Classics "Kick-Start" Party from 7-10 p.m. at the show's home, Martin Motorsports in Boyertown, Pennsylvania. On the web at martinmoto.com

3/18 Be sure to check out the growing NOLA Vintage Grand Prix, March 18-20, at NOLA Motorsports Park in Avondale, Louisiana. This three-day event features rounds



CRAIG HOWELL

People's Choice winner Bryan Thompson (left) and his 1952 Triumph Thunderbird from the 2014 Clubman's Show.

3 and 4 of the AHRMA vintage motorcycle road race series, along with a swap meet, vintage bike show, great local food, a vendor area and more. On the web at ahrma.org

4/2 Join the folks from the Clubman's All-British Show and Swap Meet, back for the 29th year. Held at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds in San Jose, California, this year's feature is a salute to the "Triples of BSA and Triumph" (BSA Rocket 3's, Triumph T150's and T160's). This year's raffle bike is a sharp 1971 BSA B50T. The show is Saturday, April 2, with the "Morning After Ride" on Sunday. On the web at bsaocnc.org

Feb. 20-21 — Northeast Motorcycle Expo. Wilmington, MA. kevmarv.com

Feb. 26-28 — AHRMA Road Racing at Roebbling Road. Bloomingdale, GA. ahrma.org

Mar. 4-5 — AMCA 2016 Sunshine Chapter National Meet. New Smyrna Beach, FL. sunshineamca.org

Mar. 4-6 — Vintage Motorcycle Alliance 5th Annual International Vintage Motorcycle Swap Meet and Bike Show. Eustis, FL. vintagemotorcyclealliance.com

Mar. 5-6 — 26th Annual Super Show and Swap Meet. Colorado Springs, CO. pro-promotions.com

Mar. 6 — Jeff Williams Motorcycle Swap Meet. Sedalia, MO. jwswapmeet.com

Mar. 6 — Walneck's Swap Meet and Show. Princeton, IL. walneckswap.com

Mar. 11-13 — 13th Annual Inland Northwest Motorcycle Show and Sale. Spokane, WA. spokanemotorcycleshow.com

Mar. 13 — Walneck's Swap Meet and Show. Springfield, OH. walneckswap.com

Mar. 20 — 44th Annual Kalamazoo Motorcycle Swap Meet. Kalamazoo, MI. kalamazooswap.com

Mar. 21-22 — 39th Annual Vintage Motorcycle & Bicycle Rally, Show and Swap Meet. Caldwell, ID. idahovintagemotorcycleclub.org

Mar. 26 — Giddy Up Vintage Chopper Show. New Braunfels, TX. www.giddyuptx.com

Mar. 26 — 13th Annual Cadillac Swap Meet. Cadillac, MI. cadillacswap.com

Mar. 27 — So-Cal Cycle Show and Swap Meet. Long Beach, CA. socialcycleswapmeet.com

Apr. 3 — Jeff Williams Motorcycle Swap Meet. Oklahoma City, OK. jwswapmeet.com

Apr. 8-10 — The Handbuilt Motorcycle Show 2016. Austin, TX. revivalcycles.com

Apr. 10 — Walneck's Swap Meet and Show. St. Charles, IL. walneckswap.com

Apr. 22-23 — AMCA National Meet Perkiomen Chapter. Oley, PA. antiquemotorcycle.org

Apr. 22-24 — Corsa Motoclassica at Willow Springs. Rosamond, CA. garagecompany.com, ahrma.org

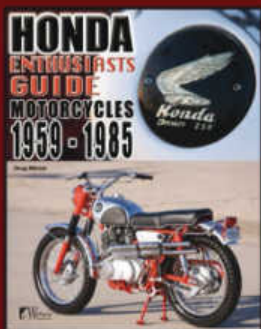
Apr. 24 — Walneck's Swap Meet and Show. Woodstock, IL. walneckswap.com

Apr. 24 — Jeff Williams Motorcycle Swap Meet. Kansas City, MO. jwswapmeet.com

Apr. 24 — So-Cal Cycle Swap Meet. Long Beach, CA. socialcycleswapmeet.com

Apr. 27-30 — 34th Annual Laughlin River Run. Laughlin, NV. laughlinriverrun.com

Apr. 28-May 1 — 2nd Annual AMCA Cherokee Chapter Concours D' Pate. Texas Motor Speedway, Ft. Worth, TX. cherokeeamca.org



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Each model is described in general terms, including differences and similarities between the model being discussed and similar models. In addition, there is helpful information such as: the cost to acquire each project, the value when finished, which bikes and models should not be restored due to declining value, and where to find the frame and engine numbers.

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New Stuff for Old Bikes

From petcocks for vintage Hondas to great riding jackets for spring, here are six cool products every classic bike fan should know about.



Degree wheel

If you're not sure whether the ignition or cam timing on your engine has been properly set, a degree wheel is the best way to check, allowing you to confirm proper ignition and cam timing specifications. Made from 0.052-inch thick aluminum with a 6-3/4-inch outside diameter and a 6mm center hole, Motion Pro's degree wheel is blue anodized with easy-to-read numbers, making it easy to check and set ignition and/or cam timing. Works on 2- and 4-stroke engines. \$14.99. More info: motionpro.com



Staying clean

Car and motorcycle detail specialist Wizards has put together a detail kit especially for motorcyclists. Called the Wizards Cool Kit for Motorcycles, the nine-piece kit includes Wizards' own Mist-N-Shine professional spray detailer, Bug Release bug remover, Bike Wash special wash/cleaner, Shine Master polish, a multi-fiber cloth, plus a Wizards kickstand pad and Wizards can koozie, all packed in a soft-sided cooler. \$69.02. More info: wizardsproducts.com



Easy air

Wisconsin-based Big Bike Parts has a neat lock-on valve stem extension for bikes with hard-to-reach valve stems. The braided nylon hose is 24 inches long with a 90-degree lock-on fitting for your valve stem on one end and a standard pressure stem on the other, making it much easier to check air pressure and air up tires on wheels with limited access, a particular issue on bikes with large brake rotors. \$9.95. More info: bigbikeparts.com



Honda petcocks

Café and vintage parts specialist Dime City Cycles in Largo, Florida, is stocking reproduction fuel petcocks for a wide selection of vintage Hondas covering various models and years from 1965-1981 including CB/CL350s and 360s, CB400F, CB400 Hawk, CB/CL450s, CB500/550s, CX500s and CB750s. Aftermarket original equipment replacements, they're made of aluminum and steel and designed to fit and flow just like the originals. Priced from \$20.95 (shown) to \$63.50. More info: dimecitycycles.com



Setting ignition

Honda specialist Charlie's Place in Los Angeles now has an electronic ignition kit to fit various Honda little twins made between 1964-1979, including the S/CL/CT/SL90, the CB/CL/SL100, the CA92/95, the SS/CL/CB125, the CA160 and the CA/CD175. The kit replaces the standard breaker points and condenser units with a single electronic pickup for superior and vastly more reliable spark. No modifications necessary, and once properly set, you're unlikely to ever touch it again. \$230. More info: charlies-place.com



Looking good

Rev'It has introduced its own wax-coated jacket. Recalling the early days of British motorcycle jackets, the classically styled Rev'It Zircon features water-resistant, wax-coated polyester. The elbows and shoulders are reinforced with contrasting polyester oxford and the jacket's vintage looks are emphasized by a traditional adjustment strap waistband and four large stash pockets. A detachable thermal liner enhances cold-weather riding and there's CE-rated Knox Lite armor. Available in black (shown), sand and dark green. \$379.99. More info: revitsport.com



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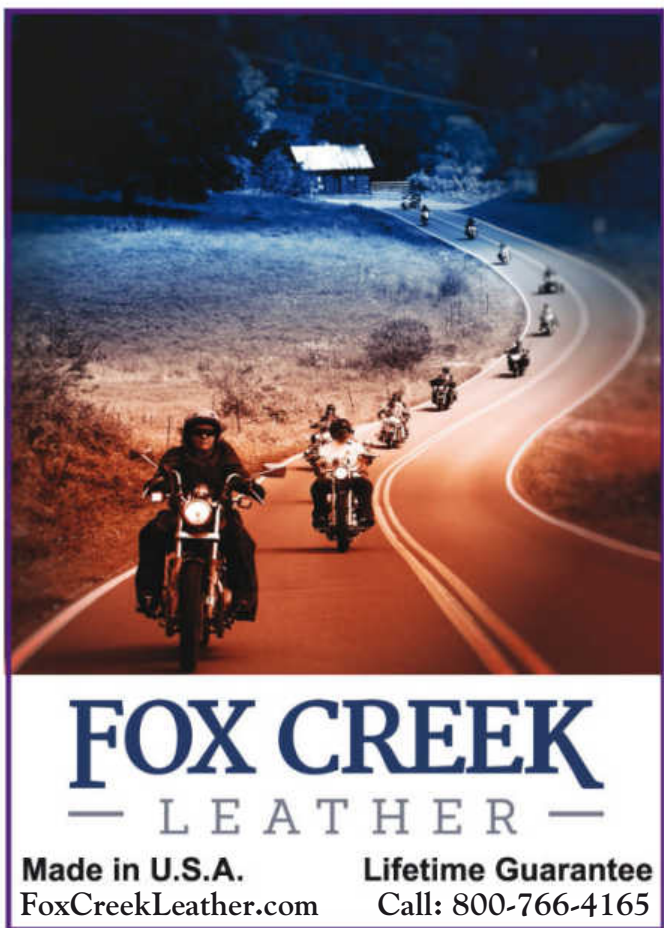
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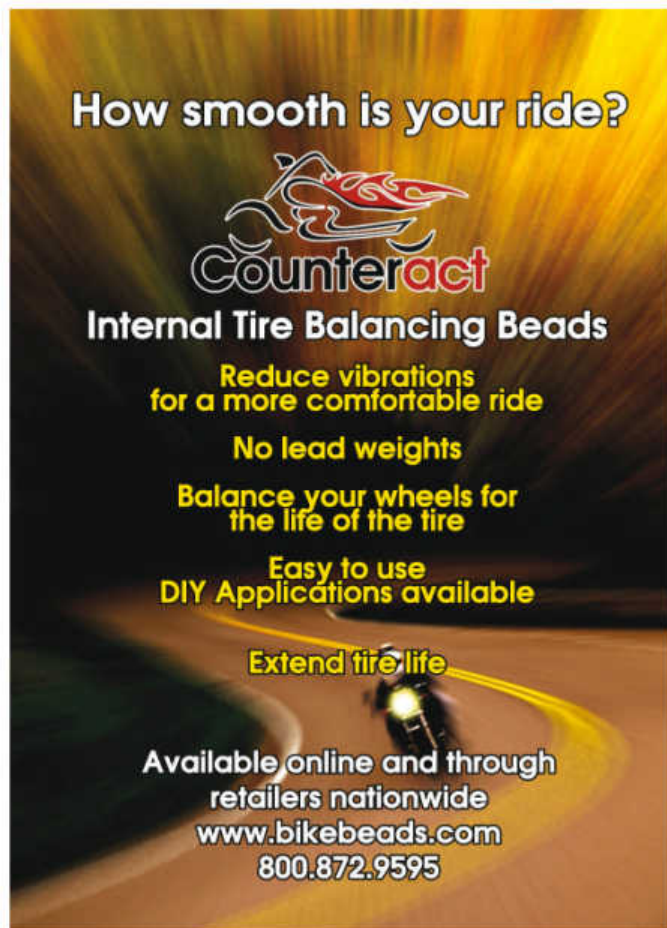
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Custom Motorcycle Fabrication

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The Art of Ducati

Ducati expert Ian Falloon teams with renowned British photographer James Mann to present a gorgeously illustrated, wonderfully curated review of more than six decades of Ducati excitement. From the single-cylinder bikes of the 1950s and 1960s to the bevel-drive twins of the 1970s and early 1980s to the high-performance bikes of the 21st century, *The Art of Ducati* showcases a motorcycle marque that has never rested on its laurels.

#7358 \$60.00



The Complete Book of Classic and Modern Triumph Motorcycles 1937-Today

For the first time ever, this book collects all of the motorcycles from this iconic brand in a single volume. Written by respected Triumph expert Ian Falloon, all of the major and minor models are covered, with an emphasis on the most exemplary, era-defining motorcycles, such as the Thunderbird, Tiger, Trophy, Bonneville, and new machines such as the Speed Triple, Thruxton, and Daytona 675.

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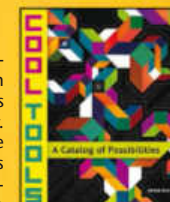
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This book is a thorough year-by-year guide to every production machine ever built by Germany's leading motorcycle manufacturer. All of the BMW's bike families are covered: the side-valve machines from the early years, the early overhead-valve performance bikes, the postwar Airheads and Oilheads, the modern overhead-cam singles and more. Complete technical specifications for each model make this book a must-have for any serious BMW aficionado.

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Hodaka

Written by Ken Smith, this book is a captivating, colorful look back at one of the wildest machines of the 1960s and 1970s. The Combat Wombat, Road Toad, Dirt Squirt and the fantastic Super Rat are all covered in detail. More than 15 years in the making, this exhaustively researched tome contains all the details about the machines as well as a treasure trove of photographs, advertisements and graphics.

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You want to be on your motorcycle on the open road ... but if you can't be, then the next best place is the garage. This book takes you inside the ultimate garages, from an old firehouse to a lavishly finished tin shed to a plain, two-car attached structure harboring a treasured bike while the family car sits outdoors. *Motorcycle Dream Garages* opens the doors to 16 palaces for two-wheeled work and play.

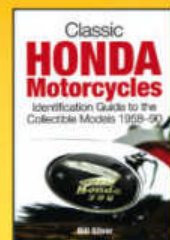
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Classic Honda Motorcycles

Honda made its mark on the motorcycle world with small, affordable bikes, and grew well beyond that to create some of the most important performance machines ever built. This guide to the collectible Hondas gives prospective buyers a leg up on the current market for groundbreaking classics. Photographs of the models are accompanied by complete descriptions of specifications, components, paint codes and serial numbers. The author also highlights common repair and restoration needs, and looks ahead at future collectible models.

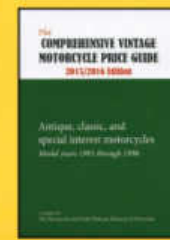
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BMW: Motorcycles of the Century is a reference book written by collectors, for collectors, and serves as an essential guide to estimate and buy vintage motorbikes from this prestigious international brand. For the first time, all the specific details are gathered in a single publication: chassis, motor numbers and engines of every model, economic values, and original auto parts.

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How to Build a Café Racer

What's old is new again, and the newest trend on the block is the café racer. Converting a stock motorcycle to a café racer requires more than a fairing and a few decals. *How to Build a Café Racer* starts with chapters on planning and choosing an appropriate bike, followed by chapters that detail the modifications that will likely be embraced by anyone converting a stocker to a rocker.

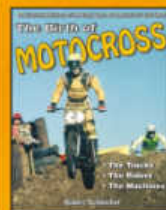
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The Kawasaki Triples Bible

The Kawasaki Triples Bible illustrated with hundreds of archive photographs and period adverts, plus personal memories from some of the racers and tuners who got the best from the fearsome H1 500 and H2 750 machines of the 60s and 70s. With information provided by Kawasaki Museum, acknowledged experts such as Rick Brett and Dave Marsden, it defines the enduring appeal of the models.

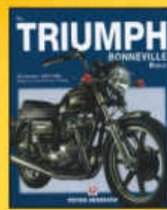
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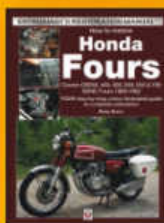
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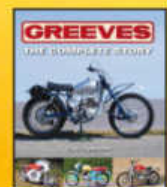
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Classic British Motorcycles

In the modern era, mass-produced motorcycles tend to be Japanese or Italian, with the 'big four' oriental manufacturers dominating the market. However, until the 1950s, and even into the 60s, British makers such as Norton and Vincent ruled the roost. These legendary companies, and many smaller British firms, are motorcycling's founding companies. Superbly illustrated with more than 150 color pictures, many previously unpublished, this book is a captivating and highly informative account of the men, machines, race meetings and world events that shaped the development of the motorcycle from its bicycle origins.

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Greeves: The Complete Story

This book gives a detailed history from the early 1950s to the 1970s. With production histories and specification details for all main models, it is an ideal resource for anyone with an interest in these classic sporting motorcycles.

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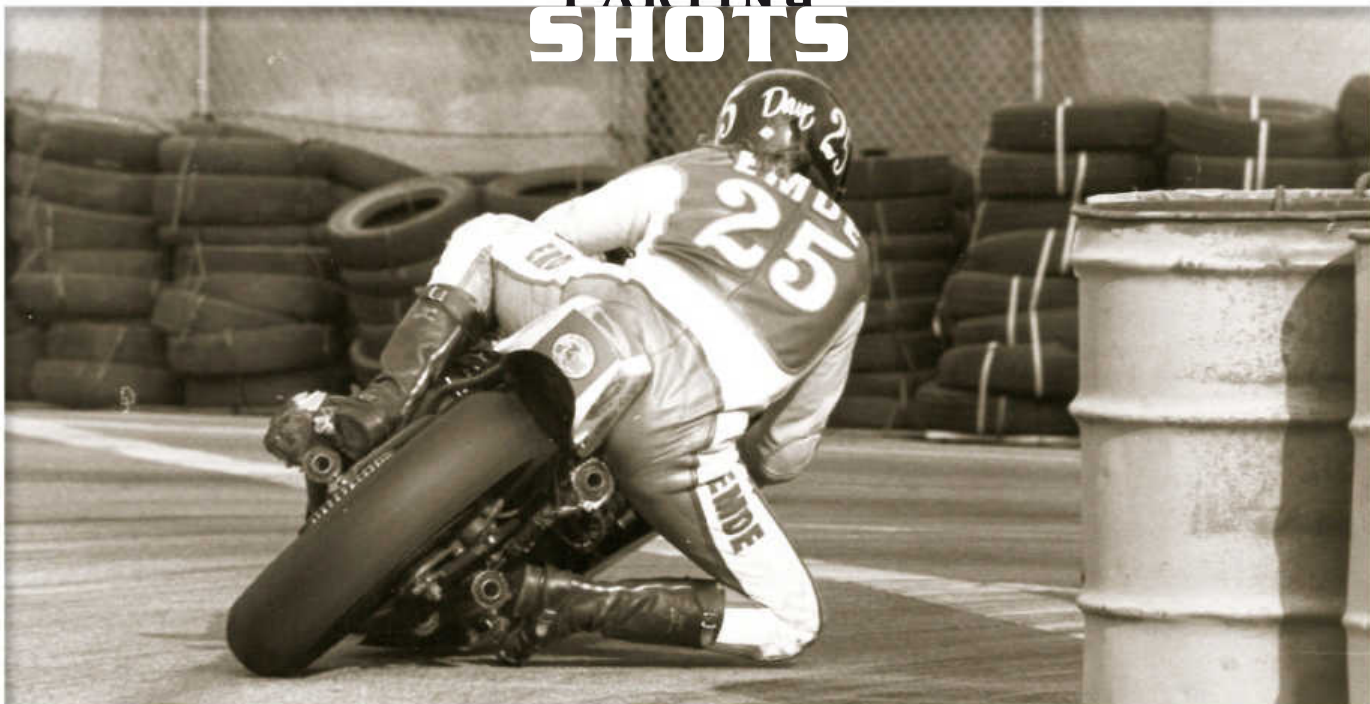
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David Emde cranks his Yamaha TZ750 into a barrel- and tire-lined turn at the 1977 Long Beach Grand Prix, held on the streets of Long Beach, California.

Taking it to the streets

Forget about gravel runoff sections on a racetrack. And don't even talk about safety barriers like Airfences and other high-tech devices that line racetracks today in the name of rider safety. When motorcycle road racers took to the streets for a sanctioned AMA meet as part of the Formula 1 Grand Prix car race through the city streets of Long Beach, California, in April 1977, only a few feet separated the field from contact with the cement K-Rail barriers marking the 2.02-mile course.

The Long Beach race was a true road race, a rarity in the U.S. even then. The 38-lap, 77-mile race spawned from an effort to help fill the Formula 1 race program when Long Beach Grand Prix organizers invited the AMA to host an invitational motorcycle race as a support feature prior to the F1 race itself. The major draw was Team Suzuki's Barry Sheene and his factory RG500. Among the American invitees were former AMA Grand National Champions Gary Nixon, Gene Romero and Gary Scott, accompanied by a bevy of aspiring and established stars such as Mike Baldwin, David Emde, Ron Pierce, Wes Cooley, Dale Singleton and eventual race winner and Kenny Roberts protégé Skip Aksland. All of the Americans rode 2-stroke 4-cylinder Yamaha TZ750s.

But the real draw was the race course itself. In the April 1977 issue of *Cycle* magazine, Cook Neilson wrote that the turns were "laced with bumps, spotted with oil and edged with linked 4-ton concrete crash wall sections." After acknowledging the course's two fast stretches — the main straight along what was normally Ocean Boulevard and the fast sweeper otherwise known as Shoreline Drive — Neilson pointed out that "the rest of the course had the bikes rooting around in first and second [gears], popping wheelies in all directions and dodging curbs, manhole covers, stutter bumps and parking lot paint stripes."

This was actually the second time that motorcycles

were part of Long Beach's F1 program. The year before, LBGp organizers presented an exhibition race consisting of half a dozen Kawasaki-Team Hansen race bikes: It was really more of a geek show-turned-parade than an actual race.

The 1977 event was a bona fide race, with Sheene and his square-four Suzuki grabbing pole position, posting a time of 1:40.7. However, poor tire selection for the race itself relegated him to third place behind Aksland and Romero, who set the fastest lap at 1:38.9. Subsequent years featured more motorcycle racing, and by 1981 sidecars filled the docket. Eventually, though, the bikes and side hacks proved to be more bother than worth. Rider safety became a priority, and the streets were closed to all but four-wheelers for future LBGp events.

The 1977 race proved to be a springboard to future road race success for Aksland, who proclaimed after the race, "I might make a road racer [of myself] after all." — *Dain Gingerelli*



Kevin Stafford (No. 52) leads former AMA Grand National Champion Gary Nixon during the 1977 Long Beach Grand Prix.



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